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DON ORSINO.¹

BY F. MARION CRAWFORD.

CHAPTER XV.

THERE was nothing in the note burnt by Orsino which he might not have shown to his mother, since he had already told her the name of the writer. It contained the simple statement that Maria Consuelo was about to leave Rome, and expressed the hope that she might see Orsino before her departure, as she had a small request to make of him in the nature of a commission. She hoped he would forgive her for putting him to so much inconvenience.

Though he betrayed no emotion in reading the few lines, he was in reality annoyed by them, and he wished that he might be prevented from obeying the summons. Maria Consuelo had virtually dropped the acquaintance, and had refused repeatedly and in a marked way to receive him. And now, at the last moment, when she needed something of him, she chose to recall him by a direct invitation. There was nothing to be done but to yield; and it was characteristic of Orsino that, having submitted to necessity, he did not put off the inevitable moment, but went to her at once.

The days were longer now than they had been during the time when he had visited her every day, and the lamp was not yet on the table when Orsino entered the small sitting-room.

Maria Consuelo was standing by the window looking out into the street, and her right hand rested against the pane while her fingers tapped it softly but impatiently. She turned quickly as he entered, but the light was behind her and he could hardly see her face. She came towards him and held out her hand.

"It is very kind of you to have come so soon," she said, as she took her old accustomed place by the table.

Nothing was changed, excepting that the two or three new books at her elbow were not the same ones which had been there two months earlier. In one of them was thrust the silver paper-cutter with the jewelled handle, which Orsino had never missed. He wondered whether there were any reason for the unvarying sameness of these details.

"Of course I came," he said. "And as there was time to-day, I came at once."

He spoke rather coldly, still resenting her former behaviour and expecting that she would immediately say what she wanted of him. He would promise to execute the commission, whatever it might be, and after ten minutes of conversation he would take his leave. There was a short pause, during which he looked at her. She did not seem well. Her face was pale and her eyes were deep with shadows.

Even her auburn hair had lost something of its gloss. Yet she did not look older than before, a fact which proved her to be even younger than Orsino had imagined. Saving the look of fatigue and suffering in her face, Maria Consuelo had changed less than Orsino during the winter, and she realised the fact at a glance. A determined purpose, hard work, the constant exertion of energy and will, and possibly, too, the giving up to a great extent of gambling and strong drinks, had told in Orsino's face and manner as a course of training tells upon a lazy athlete. The bold black eyes had a more quiet glance, the well-marked features had acquired strength and repose, the lean jaw was firmer and seemed more square. Even physically Orsino had improved, though the change was undefinable. Young as he was, something of the power of mature manhood was already coming over his youth.

"You must have thought me very—rude," said Maria Consuelo, breaking the silence and speaking with a slight hesitation which Orsino had never noticed before.

"It is not for me to complain, madam," he answered. "You had every right——"

He stopped short, for he was reluctant to admit that she had been justified in her behaviour towards him.

"Thanks," she said, with an attempt to laugh. "It is pleasant to find magnanimous people now and then. I do not want you to think that I was capricious. That is all."

"I certainly do not think that. You were most consistent. I called three times and always got the same answer."

He fancied that he heard her sigh, but she tried to laugh again.

"I am not imaginative," she answered. "I dare say you found that out long ago. You have much more imagination than I."

"It is possible, madam, but you have not cared to develop it."

"What do you mean?"

"What does it matter? Do you remember what you said when I bade you good-night at the window of your carriage after Del Ferice's dinner? You said that you were not angry with me. I was foolish enough to imagine that you were in earnest. I came again and again, but you would not see me. You did not encourage my illusion."

"Because I would not receive you? How do you know what happened to me? How can you judge of my life? By your own? There is a vast difference."

"Yes, indeed!" exclaimed Orsino almost impatiently. "I know what you are going to say. It will be flattering to me of course. The unattached young man is dangerous to the reputation. The foreign lady is travelling alone. There is the foundation of a *vaudeville* in that!"

"If you must be unjust, at least do not be brutal," said Maria Consuelo in a low voice, and she turned her face away from him.

"I am evidently placed in the world to offend you, madam. Will you believe that I am sorry for it, though I only dimly comprehend my fault? What did I say? That you were wise in breaking off my visits, because you are alone here, and because I am young, unmarried, and unfortunately a little conspicuous in my native city. Is it brutal to suggest that a young and beautiful woman has a right not to be compromised? Can we not talk freely for half an hour as we used to talk, and then say good-bye and part good friends until you come to Rome again?"

"I wish we could!" There was an accent of sincerity in the tone which pleased Orsino.

"Then begin by forgiving me all my sins, and put them down to ignorance, want of tact, the inexperience of youth, or a naturally weak understanding. But do not call me brutal on such slight provocation."

"We shall never agree for a long

time," answered Maria Consuelo thoughtfully.

"Why not?"

"Because, as I told you, there is too great a difference between our lives. Do not answer me as you did before, for I am right. I began by admitting that I was rude. If that is not enough I will say more, I will even ask you to forgive me; can I do more?"

She spoke so earnestly that Orsino was surprised and almost touched. Her manner now was even less comprehensible than her repeated refusals to see him had been.

"You have done far too much already," he said gravely. "It is mine to ask your forgiveness for much that I have done and said. I only wish that I understood you better."

"I am glad you do not," replied Maria Consuelo, with a sigh which this time was not to be mistaken. "There is a sadness which it is better not to understand," she added softly.

"Unless one can help to drive it away." He too spoke gently, his voice being attracted to the pitch and tone of hers.

"You cannot do that; and if you could, you would not."

"Who can tell?"

The charm which he had formerly felt so keenly in her presence, but which he had of late so completely forgotten, was beginning to return and he submitted to it with a sense of satisfaction which he had not anticipated. Though the twilight was coming on, his eyes had become accustomed to the dimness in the room and he saw every change in her pale, expressive face. She leaned back in her chair with eyes half closed.

"I like to think that you would, if you knew how," she said presently.

"Do you not know that I would?"

She glanced quickly at him, and then, instead of answering, rose from her seat and called to her maid through one of the doors, telling her to bring the lamp. She sat down again, but being conscious that they were liable

to interruption, neither of the two spoke. Maria Consuelo's fingers played with the silver knife, drawing it out of the book in which it lay and pushing it back again. At last she took it up and looked closely at the jewelled monogram on the handle.

The maid entered, set the shaded lamp upon the table and glanced sharply at Orsino. He could not help noticing the look. In a moment she was gone, and the door closed behind her. Maria Consuelo looked over her shoulder to see that it had not been left ajar.

"She is a very extraordinary person, that elderly maid of mine," she said.

"So I should imagine from her face."

"Yes. She looked at you as she passed and I saw that you noticed it. She is my protector. I never have travelled without her, and she watches over me as a cat watches a mouse."

The little laugh that accompanied the words was not one of satisfaction, and the shade of annoyance did not escape Orsino.

"I suppose she is one of those people to whose ways one submits because one cannot live without them," he observed.

"Yes. That is it,—that is exactly it," repeated Maria Consuelo. "And she is very strongly attached to me," she added after an instant's hesitation. "I do not think she will ever leave me. In fact we are attached to each other."

She laughed again as though amused by her own way of stating the relation, and drew the paper-cutter through her hand two or three times. Orsino's eyes were oddly fascinated by the flash of the jewels.

"I would like to know the history of that knife," he said, almost thoughtlessly.

Maria Consuelo started and looked at him, paler even than before. The question seemed to be a very unexpected one.

"Why?" she asked quickly.

"I always see it on the table or in

your hand," answered Orsino. "It is associated with you; I think of it when I think of you. I always fancy that it has a story."

"You are right. It was given to me by a person who loved me."

"I see,—I was indiscreet."

"No—you do not see, my friend. If you did you,—you would understand many things, and perhaps it is better that you should not know them."

"Your sadness? Should I understand that, too?"

"No. Not that."

A slight colour rose in her face, and she stretched out her hand to arrange the shade of the lamp, with a gesture long familiar to him.

"We shall end by misunderstanding each other," she continued in a harder tone. "Perhaps it will be my fault. I wish you knew much more about me than you do, but without the necessity of telling you the story. But that is impossible. This paper-cutter, for instance, could tell the tale better than I, for it made people see things which I did not see."

"After it was yours?"

"Yes. After it was mine."

"It pleases you to be very mysterious," said Orsino with a smile.

"Oh, no! It does not please me at all," she answered, turning her face away again. "And least of all with you, my friend."

"Why least with me?"

"Because you are the first to misunderstand. You cannot help it. I do not blame you."

"If you would let me be your friend, as you call me, it would be better for us both."

He spoke as he had assuredly not meant to speak when he had entered the room, and with a feeling that surprised himself far more than his hearer. Maria Consuelo turned sharply upon him.

"Have you acted like a friend towards me?" she asked.

"I have tried to," he answered, with more presence of mind than truth.

Her tawny eyes suddenly lightened.

"That is not true. Be truthful! How have you acted? How have you spoken with me? Are you ashamed to answer?"

Orsino raised his head rather haughtily, and met her glance, wondering whether any man had ever been forced into such a strange position before. But though her eyes were bright, their look was neither cold nor defiant.

"You know the answer," he said.

"I spoke and acted as though I loved you, madam, but since you dismissed me so very summarily, I do not see why you wish me to say so."

"And you, Don Orsino, have you ever been loved,—loved in earnest—by any woman?"

"That is a very strange question, madam."

"I am discreet. You may answer it safely."

"I have no doubt of that."

"But you will not? No—that is your right. But it would be kind of you,—I should be grateful if you would tell me—has any woman ever loved you dearly?"

Orsino laughed, almost in spite of himself. He had little false pride. "It is humiliating, madam. But since you ask the question and require a categorical answer, I will make my confession. I have never been loved. But you will observe, as an extenuating circumstance, that I am young. I do not give up all hope."

"No—you need not," said Maria Consuelo in a low voice, and again she moved the shade of the lamp.

Though Orsino was by no means fatuous, he must have been blind if he had not seen by this time that Madame d'Aranjuez was doing her best to make him speak as he had formerly spoken to her, and to force him into a declaration of love. He saw it, indeed, and wondered; but although he felt her charm upon him from time to time, he resolved that nothing should induce him to relax even so far as he had done already more than once dur-

ing the interview. She had placed him in a foolish position once before, and he would not expose himself to being made ridiculous again, in her eyes or his. He could not discover what intention she had in trying to lead him back to her, but he attributed it to her vanity. She regretted, perhaps, having rebuked him so soon, or perhaps she had imagined that he would have made further and more determined efforts to see her. Possibly, too, she really wished to ask a service of him, and wished to assure herself that she could depend upon him by previously extracting an avowal of his devotion. It was clear that one of the two had mistaken the other's character or mood, though it was impossible to say which was the one deceived.

The silence which followed lasted some time, and threatened to become awkward. Maria Consuelo could not or would not speak, and Orsino did not know what to say. He thought of inquiring what the commission might be with which, according to her note, she had wished to entrust him. But an instant's reflection told him that the question would be tactless. If she had invented the idea as an excuse for seeing him, to mention it would be to force her hand, as card-players say, and he had no intention of doing that. Even if she really had something to ask of him, he had no right to change the subject so suddenly. He be-thought him of a better question.

"You wrote to me that you were going away," he said quietly. "But you will come back next winter, will you not, madam?"

"I do not know," she answered, vaguely. Then she started a little, as though understanding his words. "What am I saying!" she exclaimed. "Of course I shall come back."

"Have you been drinking from the Trevi fountain by moonlight, like those mad English?" he asked, with a smile.

"It is not necessary. I know that I shall come back,—if I am alive."

"How you say that! You are as strong as I——"

"Stronger, perhaps. But then—who knows! The weak ones sometimes last the longest."

Orsino thought she was growing very sentimental, though as he looked at her he was struck again by the look of suffering in her eyes. Whatever weakness she felt was visible there, there was nothing in the full, firm little hand, in the strong and easy pose of the head, in the softly-coloured ear half hidden by her hair, that could suggest a coming danger to her splendid health.

"Let us take it for granted that you will come back to us," said Orsino cheerfully.

"Very well, we will take it for granted. What then?"

The question was so sudden and direct that Orsino fancied there ought to be an evident answer to it.

"What then?" he repeated, after a moment's hesitation. "I suppose you will live in these same rooms again, and with your permission, a certain Orsino Saracinesca will visit you from time to time, and be rude, and be sent away into exile for his sins. And Madame d'Aranjuez will go a great deal to Madame del Ferice's and to other ultra-White houses, which will prevent the said Orsino from meeting her in society. She will also be more beautiful than ever, and the daily papers will describe a certain number of gowns which she will bring with her from Paris, or Vienna, or London, or whatever great capital is the chosen official residence of her great dress-maker. And the world will not otherwise change very materially in the course of eight months."

Orsino laughed lightly, not at his own speech, which he had constructed rather clumsily under the spur of necessity, but in the hope that she would laugh, too, and begin to talk more carelessly. But Maria Consuelo was evidently not inclined for anything but the most serious view of the world, past, present, and future.

"Yes," she answered gravely. "I dare say you are right. One comes, one shows one's clothes, and one goes away again,—and that is all. It would be very much the same if one did not come. It is a great mistake to think one's self necessary to any one. Only things are necessary,—food, money, and something to talk about."

"You might add friends to the list," said Orsino, who was afraid of being called brutal again if he did not make some mild remonstrance to such a sweeping assertion.

"Friends are included under the head of 'something to talk about,'" answered Maria Consuelo.

"That is an encouraging view."

"Like all views one gets by experience."

"You grow more and more bitter."

"Does the world grow sweeter as one grows older?"

"Neither you nor I have lived long enough to know," answered Orsino.

"Facts make life long, not years."

"So long as they leave no sign of age, what does it matter?"

"I do not care for that sort of flattery."

"Because it is not flattery at all. You know the truth too well. I am not ingenious enough to flatter you, madam. Perfection is not flattered when it is called perfect."

"It is at all events impossible to exaggerate better than you can," answered Maria Consuelo, laughing at last at the overwhelming compliment. "Where did you learn that?"

"At your feet, madam. The contemplation of great masterpieces enlarges the intelligence and deepens the power of expression."

"And I am a masterpiece—of what? Of art? Of caprice? Of consistency?"

"Of nature," answered Orsino promptly.

Again Maria Consuelo laughed a little, at the mere quickness of the answer. Orsino was delighted with himself, for he fancied he was leading her rapidly away from the dangerous ground upon which she had been

trying to force him. But her next words showed him that he had not yet succeeded.

"Who will make me laugh during all these months?" she exclaimed with a little sadness.

Orsino thought she was strangely obstinate, and wondered what she would say next.

"Dear me, madam," he said, "if you are so kind as to laugh at my poor wit, you will not have to seek far to find some one to amuse you better!"

He knew how to put on an expression of perfect simplicity when he pleased, and Maria Consuelo looked at him, trying to be sure whether he were in earnest or not. But his face baffled her.

"You are too modest," she said.

"Do you think it is a defect? Shall I cultivate a little more assurance of manner?" he asked, very innocently.

"Not to-day. Your first attempt might lead you into extremes."

"There is not the slightest fear of that, madam," he answered with some emphasis.

She coloured a little and her closed lips smiled in a way he had often noticed before. He congratulated himself upon these signs of approaching ill-temper, which promised an escape from his difficulty. To take leave of her suddenly was to abandon the field, and that he would not do. She had determined to force him into a confession of devotion, and he was equally determined not to satisfy her. He had tried to lead her off her track with frivolous talk and had failed. He would try and irritate her instead, but without incurring the charge of rudeness. Why she was making such an attack upon him was beyond his understanding, but he resented it, and made up his mind neither to fly nor yield. If he had been a hundredth part as cynical as he liked to fancy himself, he would have acted very differently. But he was young enough to have been wounded by his former dismissal, though he hardly knew it.

and to seek almost instinctively to revenge his wrongs. He did not find it easy. He would not have believed that such a woman as Maria Consuelo could so far forget her pride as to go begging for a declaration of love.

"I suppose you will take Gouache's portrait away with you?" he observed, changing the subject with a directness which he fancied would increase her annoyance.

"What makes you think so?" she asked, rather drily.

"I thought it a natural question."

"I cannot imagine what I should do with it. I shall leave it with him."

"You will let him send it to the Salon in Paris, of course?"

"If he likes. You seem interested in the fate of the picture."

"A little. I wondered why you did not have it here, as it has been finished so long."

"Instead of that hideous mirror, you mean? There would be less variety. I should always see myself in the same dress."

"No—on the opposite wall. You might compare truth with fiction in that way."

"To the advantage of Gouache's fiction, you would say. You were more complimentary a little while ago."

"You imagine more rudeness than even I am capable of inventing."

"That is saying much. Why did you change the subject just now?"

"Because I saw that you were annoyed at something. Besides, we were talking about myself, if I remember rightly."

"Have you never heard that a man should always talk to a woman about himself or herself?"

"No. I never heard that. Shall we talk of you, then, madam?"

"Do you care to talk of me?" asked Maria Consuelo.

Another direct attack, Orsino thought. "I would rather hear you talk of yourself," he answered without the least hesitation.

"If I were to tell you my thoughts

about myself at the present moment, they would surprise you very much."

"Agreeably or disagreeably?"

"I do not know. Are you vain?"

"As a peacock!" replied Orsino quickly.

"Ah,—then what I am thinking would not interest you."

"Why not?"

"Because if it is not flattering it would wound you, and if it is flattering it would disappoint you by falling short of your ideal of yourself."

"Yet I confess that I would like to know what you think of me, though I would much rather hear what you think of yourself."

"On one condition I will tell you."

"What is that?"

"That you will give me your word to give me your own opinion of me afterwards."

"The adjectives are ready, madam. I give you my word."

"You give it so easily! How can I believe you?"

"It is so easy to give in such a case, when one has nothing disagreeable to say."

"Then you think me agreeable?"

"Eminently!"

"And charming?"

"Perfectly!"

"And beautiful!"

"How can you doubt it?"

"And in all other respects exactly like all the women in society to whom you repeat the same commonplaces every day of your life?"

The feint had been dexterous and the thrust was sudden, straight and unexpected.

"Madam!" exclaimed Orsino in the deprecatory tone of a man taken by surprise.

"You see,—you have nothing to say!" She laughed a little bitterly.

"You take too much for granted," he said, recovering himself. "You suppose that because I agree with you upon one point after another, I agree with you in the conclusion. You do not even wait to hear my answer, and

you tell me that I am checkmated when I have a dozen moves from which to choose. Besides, you have directly infringed the conditions. You have fired before the signal, and an arbitration would go against you. You have done fifty things contrary to agreement, and you accuse me of being dumb in my own defence. There is not much justice in that. You promise to tell me a certain secret on condition that I will tell you another. Then, without saying a word on your own part you stone me with quick questions and cry *victory* because I protest. You begin before I have had so much as——"

"For heaven's sake, stop!" cried Maria Consuelo, interrupting a speech which threatened to go on for twenty minutes. "You talk of chess, duelling, and stoning to death, in one sentence,—I am utterly confused! You upset all my ideas!"

"Considering how you have disturbed mine, it is a fair revenge. And since we both admit that we have disturbed that balance upon which alone depends all possibility of conversation, I think that I can do nothing more graceful,—pardon me, nothing less ungraceful—than wish you a pleasant journey, which I do with all my heart, madam."

Thereupon Orsino rose and took his hat.

"Sit down. Do not go yet," said Maria Consuelo, growing a shade paler, and speaking with an evident effort.

"Ah—true!" exclaimed Orsino. "We were forgetting the little commission you spoke of in your note. I am entirely at your service."

Maria Consuelo looked at him quickly and her lips trembled. "Never mind that," she said unsteadily. "I will not trouble you. But I do not want you to go away as—as you were going. I feel as though we had been quarrelling. Perhaps we have. But let us say we are good friends,—if we only say it."

Orsino was touched and disturbed.

Her face was very white and her hand trembled visibly as she held it out. He took it in his own without hesitation.

"If you care for my friendship you shall have no better friend in the world than I," he said simply and naturally.

"Thank you,—good-bye. I shall leave to-morrow."

The words were almost broken, as though she were losing control of her voice. As he closed the door behind him the sound of a wild and passionate sob came to him through the panel. He stood still, listening and hesitating. The truth which would have long been clear to an older or a vainer man, flashed upon him suddenly. She loved him very much, and he no longer cared for her. That was the reason why she had behaved so strangely, throwing her pride and dignity to the winds in her desperate attempt to get from him a single kind and affectionate word,—from him, who had poured into her ear so many words of love but two months earlier, and from whom to draw a bare admission of friendship to-day she had almost shed tears.

To go back into the room would be madness; since he did not love her, it would almost be an insult. He bent his head and walked slowly down the corridor. He had not gone far when he was confronted by a small dark figure that stopped the way. He recognised Maria Consuelo's elderly maid.

"I beg your pardon, Signore Principe," said the little black-eyed woman. "You will allow me to say a few words? I thank you, Eccellenza. It is about my Signora in there, of whom I have charge."

"Of whom you have charge?" repeated Orsino, not understanding her.

"Yes—precisely. Of course I am only her maid. You understand that. But I have charge of her though she does not know it. The poor Signora has had terrible trouble during the last few years, and at times,—you understand?—she is a little—yes—here." She touched her forehead.

"She is better now. But in my position I sometimes think it wiser to warn some friend of hers, in strict confidence. It sometimes saves some little unnecessary complication, and I was ordered to do so by the doctors we last consulted in Paris. You will forgive me, Eccellenza, I am sure."

Orsino stared at the woman for some seconds in blank astonishment. She smiled in a placid, self-confident way.

"You mean that Madame d'Aranjuez is,—mentally deranged, and that you are her keeper? It is a little hard to believe, I confess."

"Would you like to see my certificates, Signore Principe? Or the written directions of the doctors? I am sure you are discreet."

"I have no right to see anything of the kind," answered Orsino coldly. "Of course if you are acting under instructions it is no concern of mine."

He would have gone forward, but she suddenly produced a small bit of note-paper, neatly folded, and offered it to him. "I thought you might like to know where we are until we return," she said, continuing to speak in a very low voice. "It is the address."

Orsino made an impatient gesture. He was on the point of refusing the information which he had not taken the trouble to ask of Maria Consuelo herself. But he changed his mind and felt in his pocket for something to give the woman. It seemed the easiest and simplest way of getting rid of her. The only note he had chanced to be one of greater value than necessary.

"A thousand thanks, Eccellenza!" whispered the maid, overcome by what she took for an intentional piece of generosity.

Orsino left the hotel as quickly as he could. "For improbable situations, commend me to the nineteenth century and the society in which we live!" he said to himself as he emerged into the street.

CHAPTER XVI.

It was long before Orsino saw Maria Consuelo again, but the circumstances of his last meeting with her constantly recurred to his mind during the following months. It is one of the chief characteristics of Rome that it seems to be one of the most central cities in Europe during the winter, whereas in the summer months it appears to be immensely remote from the rest of the civilised world. From having been the prey of the inexpressible foreigner in his shooting season, it suddenly becomes, and remains during about five months, the happy hunting ground of the silent flea, the buzzing fly, and the insinuating mosquito. The streets are, indeed, still full of people, and long lines of carriages may be seen towards sunset in the Villa Borghesa and in the narrow Corso. Rome and the Romans are not so easily parted as London and London society, for instance. May comes,—the queen of the months in the south. June follows, and southern blood rejoices in the first strong sunshine. July trudges in at the gates sweating under the cloudless sky, heavy, slow of foot, oppressed by the breath of the coming dog-star. Still the nights are cool. Still, towards sunset, the refreshing breeze sweeps up from the sea and fills the streets. Then, behind closely-fastened blinds, the glass windows are opened and the weary hand drops the fan at last. Then men and women array themselves in the garments of civilisation and sally forth, in carriages, on foot, and in trams, according to the degrees of social importance which provide that in old countries the middle term shall be made to suffer for the priceless treasure of a respectability which is a little higher than the tram and financially not quite equal to the cab. Then, at that magic touch of the west wind the house-fly retires to his own peculiar Inferno, wherever that may be, the mosquito and the gnat pause in their work of darkness and

blood to concert fresh and more sanguinary deeds, and even the joyous and wicked flea tires of the war-dance and lays down his weary head to snatch a hard-earned nap. July drags on, and terrible August treads the burning streets, bleaching the very dust upon the pavement, scourging the broad campagna with fiery flashes of heat. Then the white-hot sky reddens in the evening when it cools, as the white iron does when it is taken from the forge. Then at last, all those who can escape from the condemned city flee for their lives to the hills, while those who must face the torment of the sun and the poison of the air turn pale in their sufferings, feebly curse their fate and then grow listless, weak and irresponsible as over-driven galley-slaves, indifferent to everything—work, rest, blows, food, sleep, and the hope of release. The sky darkens suddenly; there is a sort of horror in the stifling air. People do not talk much, and if they do are apt to quarrel and sometimes to kill one another without warning. The plash of the fountains has a dull sound like the pouring out of molten lead. The horses' hoofs strike visible sparks out of the grey stones in broad daylight. Many houses are shut, and one fancies that there must be a dead man in each whom no one will bury. A few great drops of rain make ink-stains on the pavement at noon, and there is an exasperating, half-sulphurous smell abroad. Late in the afternoon they fall again. An evil wind comes in hot blasts from all quarters at once; then a low roar like an earthquake, and presently a crash that jars upon the over-wrought nerves; great and plashing drops again, a sharp short flash,—then crash upon crash, deluge upon deluge, and the worst is over. Summer has received its first mortal wound;—but its death is more fatal than its life. The noontide heat is fierce and drinks up the moisture of the rain and the fetid dust with it. The fever-wraith rises in the damp, cool night far out

in the campagna, and steals up to the walls of the city, and over them and under them and into the houses. If there are any yet left in Rome who can by any possibility take themselves out of it, they are not long in going. Till that moment, there has been only suffering to be borne; now, there is danger of something worse. Now, indeed, the city becomes a desert inhabited by white-faced ghosts. Now, if it be a year of cholera, the dead-carts rattle through the streets all night on their way to the gate of Saint Lawrence, and the workmen count their numbers when they meet at dawn. But the bad days are not many, if only there be rain enough, for a little is worse than none. The nights lengthen and the September gales sweep away the poison-mists with kindly strength. Body and soul revive, as the ripe grapes appear in their vine-covered baskets at the street corners. Rich October is coming, the month in which the small citizens of Rome take their wives and the children to the near towns, to Marino, to Frascati, to Albano and Aricia, to eat late fruits and drink new must, with songs and laughter, and small miseries and great delights such as are remembered a whole year. The first clear breeze out of the north shakes down the dying leaves and brightens the blue air. The brown campagna turns green again, and the heart of the poor lame cab-horse is lifted up. The huge porter of the palace lays aside his linen coat and his pipe, and opens wide the great gates; for the masters are coming back, from their castles and country places, from the sea and from the mountains, from north and south, from the magic shore of Sorrento, and from distant French bathing-places, some with brides or husbands, some with rosy Roman babies making their first triumphal entrance into Rome, and some, again, returning companionless to the home they had left in companionship. The great and complicated machinery of social life is set in order and repaired for the winter;

the lost or damaged pieces in the engine are carefully replaced with new ones which will do as well or better, the joints and bearings are lubricated, the whistle of the first invitation is heard, there is some puffing and a little creaking at first, and then the big wheels begin to go slowly round, solemnly and regularly as ever, while all the little wheels run as fast as they can and set fire to their axles in the attempt to keep up the speed, and are finally jammed and caught up and smashed, as little wheels are sure to be when they try to act like big ones. But unless something happens to one of the very biggest the machine does not stop until the end of the season, when it is taken to pieces again for repairs.

That is the brief history of a Roman year, of which the main points are very much like those of its predecessor and successor. The framework is the same, but the decorations change, slowly, surely, and not, perhaps, advantageously, as the younger generation crowds into the place of the older, as young acquaintances take the place of old friends, as faces strange to us hide faces we have loved.

Orsino Saracinesca, in his new character as a contractor and a man of business, knew that he must either spend the greater part of the summer in town, or leave his affairs in the hands of Andrea Contini. The latter course was repugnant to him, partly because he still felt a beginner's interest in his first success, and partly because he had a shrewd suspicion that Contini, if left to himself in the hot weather, might be tempted to devote more time to music than to architecture. The business, too, was now on a much larger scale than before, though Orsino had taken his mother's advice in not at once going so far as he might have gone. It needed all his own restless energy, all Contini's practical talents, and perhaps more of Del Ferice's influence than either of them suspected, to keep it going on the road to success.

In July Orsino's people made ready to go up to Saracinesca. The old prince, to every one's surprise, declared his intention of going to England, and roughly refused to be accompanied by any one of the family. He wanted to find out some old friends, he said, and desired the satisfaction of spending a couple of months in peace, which was quite impossible at home, owing to Giovanni's outrageous temper and Orsino's craze for business. He thereupon embraced them all affectionately, indulged in a hearty laugh, and departed in a special carriage with his own servants.

Giovanni objected to Orsino's staying in Rome during the great heat. Orsino had not as yet entered into any explanation with his father, but the latter understood well enough that the business had turned out better than had been expected, and began to feel an interest in its further success for his son's sake. He saw the boy developing into a man by a process which he would naturally have supposed to be the worst possible one, judging from his own point of view. But he could not find fault with the result. There was no disputing the mental superiority of the Orsino of July over the Orsino of the preceding January. Whatever the sensation which Giovanni experienced as he contemplated the growing change, it was not one of anxiety nor of disappointment. But he had a Roman's well-founded prejudice against spending August and September in town. His objections gave rise to some discussion, in which Corona joined.

Orsino enlarged upon the necessity of attending in person to the execution of his contracts. Giovanni suggested that he should find some trustworthy person to take his place. Corona was in favour of a compromise. It would be easy, she said, for Orsino to spend two or three days of every week in Rome and the remainder in the country with his father and mother. They were all three quite right according to their own views, and they all three knew it.

Moreover they were all three very obstinate people. The consequence was that Orsino, who was in possession, so to say, since the other two were trying to make him change his mind, got the best of the argument and won his first pitched battle. Not that there was any apparent hostility, or that any of the three spoke hotly or loudly. They were none of them like old Saracinesca, whose feats of argumentation were vehement, eccentric, and fiery as his own nature. They talked with apparent calm through a long summer's afternoon, and the vanquished retired with a fairly good grace, leaving Orsino master of the field. But on that occasion Giovanni Saracinesca first formed the opinion that his son was a match for him, and that it would be wise in future to ascertain the chances of success before incurring the risk of a humiliating defeat.

Giovanni and his wife went out together and talked over the matter as their carriage swept round the great avenues of Villa Borghese.

"There is no question of the fact that Orsino is growing up,—is grown up already," said Sant' Ilario, glancing at Corona's calm, dark face.

She smiled with a certain pride as she heard the words. "Yes," she answered, "he is a man. It is a mistake to treat him as a boy any longer."

"Do you think it is this sudden interest in business that has changed him so?"

"Of course,—what else?"

"Madame d'Aranjuez, for instance," Giovanni suggested.

"I do not believe she ever had the least influence over him. The flirtation seems to have died a natural death. I confess, I hoped it might end in that way, and I am glad if it has. And I am very glad that Orsino is succeeding so well. Do you know, dear? I am glad, because you did not believe it possible that he should."

"No; I did not. And now that I begin to understand it, he does not like to talk to me about his affairs. I suppose that is only natural. Tell me,

has he really made money? Or have you been giving him money to lose, in order that he may buy experience?"

"He has succeeded alone," said Corona proudly. "I would give him whatever he needed, but he needs nothing. He is immensely clever and immensely energetic. How could he fail?"

"You seem to admire our first-born, my dear," observed Giovanni with a smile.

"To tell the truth, I do. I have no doubt that he does all sorts of things which he ought not to do, and of which I know nothing. You did the same at his age, and I shall be quite satisfied if he turns out like you. I would not like to have a lady-like son with white hands and delicate sensibilities, and hypocritical affectations of exaggerated morality. I think I should be capable of trying to make such a boy bad, if it only made him manly,—though I dare say that would be very wrong."

"No doubt," said Giovanni. "But we shall not be placed in any such position by Orsino, my dear. You remember that little affair last year in England? It was very nearly a scandal. But then, the English are easily led into temptation and very easily scandalised afterwards. Orsino will not err in the direction of hypocritical morality. But that is not the question. I wish to know, from you since he does not confide in me, how far he is really succeeding."

Corona gave her husband a remarkably clear statement of Orsino's affairs, without exaggeration so far as the facts were concerned, but not without highly favourable comment. She did not attempt to conceal her triumph, now that success had been in a measure attained, and she did not hesitate to tell Giovanni that he ought to have encouraged and supported the boy from the first.

Giovanni listened with very great interest, and bore her affectionate reproaches with equanimity. He felt in his heart that he had done right, and

he somehow still believed that things were not in reality all that they seemed to be. There was something in Orsino's immediate success against odds apparently heavy which disturbed his judgment. He had not, it was true, any personal experience of the building speculations in the city, nor of financial transactions in general, as at present understood, and he had recently heard of cases in which individuals had succeeded beyond their own wild-est expectations. There was, perhaps, no reason why Orsino should not do as well as other people, or even better, in spite of his extreme youth. Andrea Contini was probably a man of superior talent, well able to have directed the whole affair alone if other circumstances had been favourable to him; and there was on the whole nothing to prove that the two young men had received more than their fair share of assistance or accommodation from the bank. But Giovanni knew well enough that Del Ferice was the most influential personage in the bank in question, and the mere suggestion of his name lent to the whole affair a suspicious quality which disturbed Orsino's father. In spite of all reasonable reflections there was an air of unnatural good fortune in the case which he did not like, and he had enough experience of Del Ferice's tortuous character to distrust his intentions. He would have preferred to see his son lose money through Ugo rather than that Orsino should owe the latter the smallest thanks. The fact that he had not spoken with the man for over twenty years did not increase the confidence he felt in him. In that time Del Ferice had developed into a very important personage, having much greater power to do harm than he had possessed in former days, and it was not to be supposed that he had forgotten old wounds or given up all hope of avenging them. Del Ferice was not very subject to that sort of forgetfulness.

When Corona had finished speaking, Giovanni was silent for a few moments.

"Is it not splendid?" Corona asked enthusiastically. "Why do you not say anything? One would think that you were not pleased."

"On the contrary, so far as Orsino is concerned, I am delighted. But I do not trust Del Ferice."

"Del Ferice is far too clever a man to ruin Orsino," answered Corona.

"Exactly. That is the trouble. That is what makes me feel that though Orsino has worked hard and shown extraordinary intelligence,—and deserves credit for that—yet he would not have succeeded in the same way if he had dealt with any other bank. Del Ferice has helped him. Possibly Orsino knows that, as well as we do, but he certainly does not know what part Del Ferice played in our lives, Corona. If he did, he would not accept his help."

In her turn Corona was silent and a look of disappointment came into her face. She remembered a certain afternoon in the mountains when she had entreated Giovanni to let Del Ferice escape, and Giovanni had yielded reluctantly and had given the fugitive a guide to take him to the frontier. She wondered whether the generous impulse of that day was to bear evil fruit at last. "Orsino knows nothing about it at all," she said at last. "We kept the secret of Del Ferice's escape very carefully,—for there were good reasons to be careful in those days. Orsino only knows that you once fought a duel with the man and wounded him."

"I think it is time that he knew more."

"Of what use can it be to tell him those old stories?" asked Corona. "And after all, I do not believe that Del Ferice has done so much. If you could have followed Orsino's work, day by day and week by week, as I have, you would see how much is really due to his energy. Any other banker would have done as much as he. Besides, it is in Del Ferice's own interest——"

"That is the trouble," interrupted Giovanni. "It is bad enough that he

should help Orsino. It is much worse that he should help him in order to make use of him. If, as you say, any other bank would do as much, then let him go to another bank. If he owes Del Ferice money at the present moment, we will pay it for him."

"You forget that he has bought the buildings he is now finishing, from Del Ferice, on a mortgage."

Giovanni laughed a little. "How you have learned to talk about mortgages and deeds and all sorts of business!" he exclaimed. "But what you say is not an objection. We can pay off these mortgages, I suppose, and take the risk ourselves."

"Of course we could do that," Corona answered, thoughtfully. "But I really think you exaggerate the whole affair. For the time being, Del Ferice is not a man, but a banker. His personal character and former doings do not enter into the matter."

"I think they do," said Giovanni, still unconvinced.

"At all events, do not make trouble now, dear," said Corona in earnest tones. "Let the present contract be executed and finished, and then speak to Orsino before he makes another. Whatever Del Ferice may have done, you can see for yourself that Orsino is developing in a way we had not expected, and is becoming a serious, energetic man. Do not step in now, and check the growth of what is good. You will regret it as much as I shall. When he has finished these buildings he will have enough experience to make a new departure."

"I hate the idea of receiving a favour from Del Ferice, or of laying him under an obligation. I think I will go to him myself."

"To Del Ferice?" Corona started and looked round at Giovanni as she sat. She had a sudden vision of new trouble.

"Yes. Why not? I will go to him and tell him that I would rather wind up my son's business with him, as our former relations were not of a nature to make transactions of mutual

profit either fitting or even permissible between any of our family and Ugo Del Ferice."

"For Heaven's sake, Giovanni, do not do that."

"And why not?" He was surprised at her evident distress.

"For my sake, then,—do not quarrel with Del Ferice. It was different then, in the old days. I could not bear it now——" she stopped, and her lower lip trembled a little.

"Do you love me better than you did then, Corona?"

"So much better, I cannot tell you."

She touched his hand with hers and her dark eyes were a little veiled as they met his. Both were silent for a moment.

"I have no intention of quarrelling with Del Ferice, dear," said Giovanni, gently. His face had grown a shade paler as she spoke. The power of her hand and voice to move him had not diminished in all the years of peaceful happiness that had passed so quickly. "I do not mean any such thing," he said again. "But I mean this. I will not have it said that Del Ferice has made a fortune for Orsino, nor that Orsino has helped Del Ferice's interests. I see no way but to interfere myself. I can do it without the suspicion of a quarrel."

"It will be a great mistake, Giovanni. Wait till there is a new contract."

"I will think of it before doing anything definite."

Corona well knew that she should get no greater concession than this. The point of honour had been touched in Giovanni's sensibilities and his character was stubborn and determined where his old prejudices were concerned. She loved him very dearly, and this very obstinacy of his pleased her. But she fancied that trouble of some sort was imminent. She understood her son's nature, too, and dreaded lest he should be forced into opposing his father.

It struck her that she might herself act as intermediary. She could cer-

tainly obtain concessions from Orsino which Giovanni could not hope to extract by force or stratagem. But the wisdom of her own proposal in the matter seemed unassailable. The business now in hand should be allowed to run its natural course before anything was done to break off the relations between Orsino and Del Ferice.

In the evening she found an opportunity of speaking with Orsino in private. She repeated to him the details of her conversation with Giovanni during the drive in the afternoon.

"My dear mother," answered Orsino, "I do not trust Del Ferice any more than you and my father trust him. You talk of things which he did years ago, but you do not tell me what those things were. So far as I understand, it all happened before you were married. My father and he quarrelled about something, and I suppose there was a lady concerned in the matter. Unless you were the lady in question, and unless what he did was in the nature of an insult to you, I cannot see how the matter concerns me. They fought and it ended there, as affairs of honour do. If it touched you, then tell me so, and I will break with Del Ferice to-morrow morning."

Corona was silent, for Orsino's speech was very plain, and if she answered it at all, the answer must be the truth. There could be no escape from that. And the truth would be very hard to tell. At that time she had been still the wife of old Astrardente, and Del Ferice's offence had been that he had purposely concealed himself in the conservatory of the Frangipani's palace in order to overhear what Giovanni Saracinesca was about to say to another man's wife. The fact that on that memorable night she had bravely resisted a very great temptation did not affect the difficulty of the present case in any way. She asked herself rather whether Del Ferice's eavesdropping would appear to Orsino to be in the nature of an

insult to her, to use his own words, and she had no doubt but that it would seem so. At the same time she would find it hard to explain to her son why Del Ferice suspected that there was to be anything said to her worth overhearing, seeing that she bore at that time the name of another man then still living. How could Orsino understand all that had gone before? Even now, though she knew that she had acted well, she humbly believed that she might have done much better. How would her son judge her? She was silent, waiting for him to speak again.

"That would be the only conceivable reason for my breaking with Del Ferice," said Orsino. "We only have business relations, and I do not go to his house. I went once. I saw no reason for telling you so at the time, and I have not been there again. It was at the beginning of the whole affair. Outside of the bank we are the merest acquaintances. But I repeat what I said. If he ever did anything which makes it dishonourable for me to accept even ordinary business services from him, let me know it. I have some right to hear the truth."

Corona hesitated, and laid the case again before her own conscience, and tried to imagine herself in her son's position. It was hard to reach a conclusion. There was no doubt but that when she had learned the truth, long after the event, she had felt that she had been insulted and justly avenged. If she said nothing now, Orsino would suspect something and would assuredly go to his father, from whom he would get a view of the case not conspicuous for its moderation. And Giovanni would undoubtedly tell his son the details of what had followed, how Del Ferice had attempted to hinder the marriage when it was at last possible, and all the rest of the story. At the same time, she felt that so far as her personal sensibilities were concerned, she had not the least objection to the

continuance of a mere business relation between Orsino and Del Ferice. She was more forgiving than Giovanni.

"I will tell you this much, my dear boy," she said at last: "That old quarrel did concern me and no one else. Your father feels more strongly about it than I do, because he fought for me and not for himself. You trust me, Orsino; you know that I would rather see you dead than doing anything dishonourable. Very well. Do not ask any more questions, and do not go to your father about it. Del Ferice has only advanced you money in a business way, on good security and at a high interest. So far as I can judge of the point of honour involved, what happened long ago need not prevent your doing what you are doing now. Possibly, when you have finished the present contract, you may think it wiser to apply to some other bank, or to work on your own account with my money."

Corona believed that she had found the best way out of the difficulty, and Orsino seemed satisfied, for he nodded thoughtfully and said nothing. The day had been filled with argument and discussion about his determination to stay in town, and he was weary of the perpetual question and answer. He knew his mother well, and was willing to take her advice for the present. She, on her part, told Giovanni what she had done, and he consented to consider the matter a little longer before interfering. He disliked even the idea of a business relation extremely, but he feared that there was more behind the appearances of commercial fairness than either he or Orsino himself could understand. The better Orsino succeeded, the less his father was pleased, and his suspicions were not unfounded. He knew from San Giacinto that success was becoming uncommon, and he knew that all Orsino's industry and

energy could not have sufficed to counterbalance his inexperience. Andrea Contini, too, had been recommended by Del Ferice, and was presumably Del Ferice's man.

On the following day Giovanni and Corona with the three younger boys went up to Saracinesca, leaving Orsino alone in the great palace, to his own considerable satisfaction. He was well pleased with himself and especially at having carried his point. At his age, and with his constitution, the heat was a matter of supreme indifference to him, and he looked forward with delight to a summer of uninterrupted work in the not uncongenial society of Andrea Contini. As for the work itself, it was beginning to have a sort of fascination for him as he understood it better. The love of building, the passion for stone and brick and mortar, is inherent in some natures, and is capable of growing into a mania little short of actual insanity. Orsino began to ask himself seriously whether it were too late to study architecture as a profession, and in the meanwhile he learned more of it in practice from Contini than he could have acquired in twice the time at any polytechnic school in Europe.

He liked Contini himself more and more as the days went by. Hitherto he had been much inclined to judge his own countrymen from his own class. He was beginning to see that he had understood little or nothing of the real Italian nature when influenced by foreign blood. The study interested and pleased him. Only one unpleasant memory occasionally disturbed his peace of mind. When he thought of his last meeting with Maria Consuelo he hated himself for the part he had played, though he was quite unable to account logically, upon his assumed principles, for the severity of his self-condemnation.

(To be continued.)

MONTAIGNE.

II.

IN a former paper on Montaigne¹ I expressed my belief that the most valuable and interesting feature of his book was the portrait of the man himself. But the book has another side which must not be forgotten. Montaigne, if not the acutest or deepest thinker of his age in France, was at any rate the most original and independent one. And his age was full of interest. It was a time of storm and stress; when old beliefs were being discarded, and new ones were not yet accepted in their place; when the hopes and aspirations, which had run so high in the full flood-time of the Renaissance, were beginning to subside, and men were asking themselves whether after all this wisdom of the ancients, at which they had been bidden to drink as if it were the fountain of life, had worked any improvement in the world. They saw their country divided into two camps by a civil and religious war; they saw a court rivalling that of Elagabalus for dissoluteness, effeminacy and superstition. What had Humanism done for them? Had it brought them any nearer to the light? These were the questions that were vexing men's souls, and on all of them Montaigne, in his somewhat lazy and disconnected but thoroughly sincere and independent fashion, had thought much. His maturest years had been spent chiefly in tranquil meditation, instead of in fighting like the rest of his class. It is reasonable therefore to expect that the *Essays*, apart from their value as a revelation of character, apart from their being the most important contribution to psychology that one man has ever made,

should be valuable as the expression of Montaigne's opinions. In fact, it was no doubt in this light that they were chiefly regarded by Montaigne's contemporaries, not only in France but in England.

I have spoken of Montaigne's independence as a thinker. In this he seems at first sight merely to be working out the principle of the Renaissance, the key-note of which was the insistence on the right of free inquiry, unfettered by the discipline and dogmas of the Church. But impelled by the common craving of mankind for authority in matters of opinion, the majority of the writers and thinkers of the Renaissance had put Antiquity in the place of the Church. This had been going on in France during the first half of the sixteenth century, and in science hardly less than in literature. The leading anatomists at Paris in the reign of Francis I., Gunther of Andernach and Sylvius, did little more than expound Galen to their pupils. The first Frenchman who really substituted experiment for traditional authority as the basis of scientific knowledge was, so far as I know, Ambroise Paré, the founder of modern surgery. And what Paré did for surgery, Montaigne did for thought generally. It is true that to some extent he was anticipated by Rabelais, who criticised the political and social phenomena of his age by the natural light of his own good sense, and not by substituting one reflected light for another. But Rabelais, in spite of his strong scientific proclivities, was too thoroughly saturated with the learning of the ancients to be able to shake off entirely the pressure of their authority. Though he laughs at Epistemon for thinking that the solution of every difficulty and the remedy for every evil

¹ *Macmillan's Magazine* for September, 1890.

could be found in some ancient author, he had, as he well knew, something of Epistemon in himself.

But Montaigne, though he hardly yields to Rabelais in his admiration for the ancient writers, and though he often accepts their statements as regards matters of fact with considerable credulity, is never dominated by them in matters of opinion. The sole criterion, by which he tests every principle, every custom, every tradition, is his own good sense. And this is none the less true because he quotes the ancient writers, especially his favourites Plutarch and Seneca, at every turn, and not only quotes from them, but pillages them without acknowledgment, taking, as he quaintly says, here a leg and there a wing. For he does not go to them for opinions, but only for illustrations of opinions which he has already formed for himself. He first wrote his essay and then added the quotations; as I pointed out in my former paper, the first edition of the *Essays* contained very few quotations. Montaigne's own explanation of the matter is perfectly correct. "Certainly I have allowed as a concession to public opinion that these borrowed ornaments should accompany me; but I do not intend that they should cover or hide me. That is the very reverse of my intention, which is only to display what is my own, ay and what is my own by nature; and had I had sufficient confidence in myself, at all hazards I had spoken alone." Thus although, as has been discovered by a modern French scholar who has been at pains to investigate the subject, Montaigne's borrowed ornaments are far more numerous than appears upon the surface, it none the less remains true that his book, not only in style but in thought, is one of the most original books that have ever been written.

Montaigne is not only an original thinker in the sense that he forms his opinions for himself, instead of accepting without examination those of

others; he is also original in the sense that he does not accept traditional opinions. A long-established usage, a doctrine consecrated by the thought of centuries has no weight with him, unless he has tested it for himself. And to this testing he brings a mind singularly free from prejudices whether of education or nationality. He is as thoroughly cosmopolitan as an Encyclopædist of the eighteenth century. "I count all men my compatriots, and embrace a Pole as willingly as a Frenchman, subordinating the bonds of nationality to those which are universal and common to all." One prejudice however Montaigne had; he liked to pose as a *grand seigneur*. We have seen how he presented an escutcheon of his arms to the bath-house at Bagni di Lucca, and how he prided himself on writing illegibly. As a matter of fact his nobility was neither ancient nor splendid. His great-grandfather, Ramon Eyquem, was a merchant and a simple *bourgeois* of Bordeaux. The estate of Montaigne had only been in his family a hundred years, having been bought by his grandfather. Brantôme especially cites him as an instance of the degradation which the order of St. Michael had suffered by being conferred on the inferior *noblesse* of the Bar. But on this nobility, modest though it was, Montaigne greatly prided himself.

I have spoken of his good sense. It is a point to be noticed, because it is one of the chief causes of his popularity, especially in this country. A man may be a thinker of absolute originality, he may have emancipated himself completely from the influence of tradition, but he may be a madman. Or without being a madman he may be so entirely destitute of good sense that his opinions fall to the ground unheeded, and bear no fruit; he may disbelieve in the theory of gravity, or question the roundness of the earth. Take the case of a man who has had considerable influence, take Rousseau. No one ever more completely set

tradition at defiance. He attacked not only this or that opinion, but civilisation in general. The burden of the *Contrat Social* and of *Emile* is that civilisation is a mistake. Coming as it did at a peculiar crisis in the development of thought in France, and set off as it was by the charm of a novel and entrancing style, Rousseau's teaching was widely accepted as a new gospel; but at the present day it is for the most part regarded by robust and sober thinkers as the ravings of a wild idealist. The reason is that Rousseau though a brilliant romancer had no common sense. But it was just this common sense, or good sense, as perhaps it is better to call it, that especially distinguished Montaigne. He cared for facts and not for theories; he was a practical and not a logical philosopher; he prescribed not for Utopia but for the world as he found it. It is this quality of good sense, this regard for the limits imposed upon speculation by the phenomena of existing social life, that has endeared him to Englishmen of all ages. From his own day to ours, from Shakespeare to Landor, there is hardly a man who has left a name in letters or public affairs who was not familiar with his writings and loved them.

Of this combination of independent judgment with good sense we get a good instance in Montaigne's literary criticisms. One of the most admired writers of his day was the Spaniard Guevara, the author of the *Dial of Princes* and the *Familiar Letters*. This is what Montaigne says of the *Letters*: "Those who called them golden had a very different opinion of them to what I have." His judgment about Aretino is equally independent and equally sound. He cannot understand why the Italians called him Divine; beyond a gift for ingenious, but laboured and fantastic, epigram, and eloquence of a certain sort, he can see nothing in him out of the way. He thinks the *Axiochus*, which in his time was attributed to Plato, a feeble work, though he modestly adds that

he mistrusts his own judgment. How gratified he would have been to learn that the *Axiochus* was not by Plato. He even ventures to criticise Cicero's style, and that in an age when such a criticism was considered almost blasphemy. "To confess the truth boldly, I find his manner of writing tiresome. . . . if I have spent an hour in reading him, and that's a great deal for me, and I reckon up how much sap and substance I have got from him, I find that for the most part it is nothing but wind." But, as we should expect, he thoroughly appreciated the letters to Atticus, for they were revelations of Cicero's character. For the same reason he liked the lives of Diogenes Laertius, and above all those of his favourite Plutarch. Besides biography his favourite reading was in history and poetry. History he emphatically speaks of as his quarry (*c'est mon gibier*). He liked either simple narrators like Froissart, or historians of real critical power, but, "Unfortunately," he says, "the majority of historians are something between the two, and so spoil everything." His criticisms on Guicciardini, Comines and the memoirs of du Bellay are extremely good. He had a great admiration for Caesar's style; "The style not of a pedant, or a monk, or a lawyer, but of a soldier." He gave the palm to Amyot as the first French writer of the day, partly for the simplicity and purity of his language, but especially for having made Plutarch known to Frenchmen. He calls Amyot's translation the breviary of unlearned folk like himself.

Among Latin poets he puts Virgil, Lucretius, Catullus and Horace far above the rest, a judgment which will commend itself to most Latin scholars. He ranks Virgil above Lucretius, though when he comes across certain passages of Lucretius he feels somewhat shaken in his estimate. As for those who compare Ariosto with Virgil, he says they are stupid barbarians, and he prefers Terence to

Plautus. Finally let me quote his forcible version of Horace's well-known lines: "You may play the fool in anything else you please, but not in poetry."

It seems natural to pass from Montaigne's views on books to his views on education; but I need not dwell at any length on this topic, as it has been frequently discussed in histories of educational theories. I cannot help thinking, however, that Montaigne would have been pleasantly surprised to see himself ticketed not only as an educationalist, but as a separate species of that august genus,—a naturalist is I believe what they call him,—for in good truth his educational views are anything but systematical. They are to be found partly in the essay *On Pedantry* (i. 24), partly in that *On the Affection of Fathers to Children* (ii. 8), but chiefly in the essay entitled *On the Education of Children* (i. 25), and addressed to Diane de Foix, Comtesse de Gursion. And in this essay, it should be observed, Montaigne is specially concerned with the education of an individual, and of an individual of a particular class (he was not by the way actually in existence, but he was shortly expected, for, "You are too noble," gallantly says Montaigne to the Countess, "to begin otherwise than with a male"), of the class of those who, not having to earn their living, are able to pursue learning purely with a view to their own improvement. "Our endeavour," he says, "is to make not a grammarian, or a logician, but a gentleman"; and, "Our child can only give the first fifteen or sixteen years of his life to education; the rest must be spent in action."

But although many of his precepts are addressed to a special class, there is much in the essay that is of general import. Here again the two dominant notes are independence and common sense. At a time when Humanism formed the basis of all education, he dares to say, "Greek and Latin

are beautiful ornaments, but we pay too dear for them." In an age when multifarious learning was the chief object of men's desires he could make the following remarks:

The aim of all our fathers' care and expenditure is but to furnish our heads with learning; of judgment and virtue you hear nothing. Cry out in a crowd of one passer-by, "What a learned man!" and of another, "What a good man!" and all eyes and reverence are turned towards the former. This should not be: a third crier is wanted, to cry, "What heavy heads!" We readily ask, "Does he know Greek or Latin? Does he write in verse or in prose?" but the question whether a man has become better or more sensible, which ought to have been the first, is left to the last. We should ask, who has learnt best, not who has learnt most.

In Montaigne's eyes the object of education is to form a boy's character and prepare him for life, and to fill him not so much with learning as with the desire of learning, "with an honest curiosity for information about everything." This sounds perhaps obvious and commonplace, but the seed which Montaigne sowed three centuries ago has, it must be confessed, fallen too often on stony ground. There are a large number of persons concerned with education at the present day who, if they have equipped a boy with a sufficient stock of learning to enable him to pass an examination, fold their hands and think that they have done all that is needful. To conclude this topic I will quote two aphorisms which Montaigne has left to us: "Every abridgment of a good book is a foolish abridgment"; and, "Learning in one man's hand is a sceptre; in another's a bauble."

In spite of Montaigne's boldness and independence of mental attitude and his complete detachment from traditional opinion, he was in politics a Conservative. There are various conditions of temperament besides stolid inertia which tend to Conservatism. It was the romantic and reverent love of ancient things which made Sir Walter Scott a Conservative; it was

fear of unknown forces which made one of Voltaire; it was scepticism which produced the same result in Pierre Bayle. Now all these causes acted more or less upon Montaigne; he had a genuine love of the past in its poetical and picturesque aspect, he dreaded revolutionary measures, while the liveliness of mind which might have led him to welcome change was tamed by his doubts as to whether the new would be any improvement on the old. "I am not very ready," he says, "to welcome change; for I see in contrary opinions a like weakness."

I have already pointed out in my former paper that he was unhesitatingly for the Catholics as against the Huguenots. It was indeed the only side which a patriot could take, unless from conviction he had embraced the new religion. Partly no doubt from love of ease, but in a large measure from a genuine hatred of intolerance, Montaigne took no active part in the Civil Wars. On the formation of the League it was only to be expected that he should be found on the side of the legitimate monarchy, representing as it did good sense, moderation, and patriotism as against the blind obstinacy, the rancorous zeal, the truckling to Spain and Rome, which guided the counsels of the Leaguers. He belonged in fact to the party of the *Politiques*, as they were called, in the ranks of which were to be found, with the exception of the best Huguenots, all the most enlightened and patriotic spirits in France. The death of Henry III. gave the succession to a man for whom Montaigne had a deep liking and admiration, and no one can have welcomed more gladly than he did the day when Henry of Navarre was firmly seated upon the throne.

It is also a sign of Montaigne's good sense that he speaks in strong terms of the practice of duelling as it was carried on in his day, that is to say with two or even three seconds who were bound to engage with one

another, as well as the principals. Nor are his remarks confined to this particular kind of duelling; he is almost as strongly opposed to duelling altogether. He contrasts it with the tournaments of former days: "It is a less noble practice, in that it has only a private aim; it teaches us to work injury on one another, in violation of the laws and of justice; in whatever form it is carried on, it always produces disastrous results." Duelling still flourishes in France, but at least this can now be said for it, that it does not often produce disastrous results.

The most interesting, and at the same time the most difficult, question that one has to deal with in considering Montaigne's opinions is his general attitude towards human and revealed knowledge, or briefly, his philosophy. Or, to put the question in another form, what was the nature and extent of his scepticism? Pascal, as we know, while he borrowed from him many of his arguments and not a little of his method, looked on him with extreme bitterness as a dangerous enemy to the Christian religion; Sainte-Beuve, endorsing the opinion of Port Royal, believed that the object of his apology for Raimond Sebond was nothing less than under the veil of an assumed scepticism to destroy all transcendental belief. Emerson, in his well-known essay, treats him as the typical representative of scepticism. He uses the word sceptic, however, not in its ordinary meaning, but in its literal one of a considerer, or inquirer. But this use of the word is likely to lead, and probably has led, to misunderstanding; for a great many people are no doubt familiar with the title of the essay, *Montaigne or the Sceptic*, who have never read a line either of the essay or of Montaigne, and scepticism to many means religious disbelief.

New a sceptic in this sense of the word Montaigne certainly was not. He not only professed but believed himself to be an orthodox Catholic.

At the beginning of the essay *On Prayers* (i. 56) he makes solemn profession of his adhesion to the "Catholic Church, Apostolic and Roman, in which I shall die and in which I was born," and in the same essay he tells us that the Lord's Prayer was the only prayer which he used on every occasion, and that he constantly made the sign of the Cross, even when he yawned. In an earlier essay (i. 26) he expresses his belief in the miracles of the early Church, and inculcates obedience to Church dogmas with the thoroughness of a Newman or a Liddon: "Either we must submit ourselves entirely to the authority of our ecclesiastical government, or we must break with it altogether; it is not for us to settle how much obedience we owe it." Nor were these professions of faith in any way belied by Montaigne's actions. We have seen how he made a pilgrimage to the Casa Santa at Loreto, and in what reverent and perfectly naïve terms he gives an account of it in his journal, a record, be it remembered, not meant for publication. We are told by Etienne Pasquier that on his death-bed, when the priest was in the act of elevating the Host, he sat up as well as he could in his feeble state, with his hands clasped, and in that last act offered up his soul to God.

In the face of all this there are only two possible suppositions; either Montaigne was a gross hypocrite and liar, or he really believed in the Catholic religion and in the Roman form of it. The former supposition is, I venture to say, excluded beyond all doubt by what we know of Montaigne's life and character.

But it has been said by Dean Church, and there is a large measure of truth in the remark, "That Montaigne's views both of life and death are absolutely and entirely unaffected by the fact of his professing to believe the Gospel." How are we to reconcile this with Montaigne's honesty? The answer lies partly in his own words: "Others form man, I give an account

of him. I do not teach, I relate." He does not profess to be a moralist, his business is simply to record his own experiences. The whole essay in which these words occur, *On Repentance* (iii., 2), is in its profound knowledge of human nature and frank sincerity of self-revelation one of the most remarkable of the whole book; and it is also the one which best represents Montaigne's attitude towards Christianity in its bearing on practical life. He belongs, he tells us, to the class of men to whom vice is hateful, but who give way to indulgence in it whenever the pleasure or other advantage seems to them greatly to outweigh the sin. Further he admits that he finds it very difficult to believe in repentance for those sins which we commit frequently and deliberately, sins, as he calls them, of temperament. Our virtues and our vices, he says, are born with us; we may keep them out of sight, but we cannot eradicate them. It is absurd to talk of growing better as you grow older; the repentance which old age brings is merely an accident arising from our blunted appetites. In fact we are really worse instead of better when we are old, for our will is weaker and has less force to resist temptation.

All this, it must be confessed, however accurately and profoundly it represents the actual experience of a large number of human beings, is thoroughly pagan in tone. Thus on the question which perhaps more than any other divides the Christian from the ordinary man of the world Montaigne is found frankly siding with the latter. "A man cannot alter his character," says Montaigne. "Yes!" replies the Christian, "by the grace of God he can." And this brings us to the real explanation of Montaigne's attitude towards religion. He regarded it, as so many men do, as something apart, as something lying outside the plane of man's daily life; he consequently refused to apply to it the same canons of criticism which he brought

to bear on every department of human knowledge. The critical spirit which, in pursuance of the dominant characteristic of the age, the reformers had applied to the Catholic Church was in his eyes a dangerous experiment. The promiscuous singing of the Psalms by people of all classes, which Marot's and Beza's versions had brought into use; the translation of the Bible into the vulgar tongue; the revelation of the secrets of religion to the ignorant; all this was to him extremely distasteful. Theology and human philosophy were in his eyes two distinct domains, the frequenters of which ought to keep strictly to their own side of the fence. It is this view which is more or less the key-note of the long essay entitled, *An Apology for Raimond Sebond*, the essay which more than any other has earned for Montaigne his reputation as a sceptic, the armoury from which Pascal borrowed most of his weapons, to turn them, as he believed, against the forger of them.

Raimond Sebond was a professor of medicine and theology at Toulouse in the fifteenth century, who wrote a book called *Theologia Naturalis*, the purport of which was to establish the truth of the Christian religion by human and natural reasons. A copy of this book was given by the well-known scholar Pierre Bunel to Montaigne's father, who many years afterwards, not long before his death, ordered his son to translate it into French. The translation was published in 1569. Two classes of objectors, says Montaigne, found fault with the book. The orthodox said that it was useless, for Christianity can only be apprehended by faith, not by the light of human reason; the unbelievers declared that Sebond's arguments were feeble. It was chiefly to meet the objections of this "more malicious and dangerous" class that Montaigne wrote his *Apology*. Sebond's arguments are feeble, he maintains, because human reason is feeble. Beasts are the equal of men; human knowledge is all vanity; ignorant people are as well off as the

learned. Philosophers are no wiser than the rest; look at their contradictions; the only true philosophy is comprised in the motto, *Que scay-je?* Man's conception of God is merely anthropomorphism; we are really in complete ignorance of God's nature. And we are equally ignorant about our own nature, especially about our own soul. See how our opinions contradict one another; and not only public opinion, but human knowledge generally is subject to perpetual change. Men do not even know what they want. Our very senses are untrustworthy. The conclusion is that human nature of itself is vile; Christian faith is therefore a necessity.

Such is briefly and baldly the line of Montaigne's argument. It is evident in the first place that his defence of Sebond is a mere peg on which to hang a tirade against human reason. Secondly it may be noticed that the essay is in one respect very different from any of the others; it is very much longer, nearly three times as long as the longest essay in the Third Book, and five times as long as any of its predecessors. As a natural consequence it is more of a declamation, more of a set exposition than any of the others. Montaigne has seated himself on his favourite hobby-horse and urges him along with evident satisfaction; consequently we find here more of that exaggeration of statement to which he is always liable than we do elsewhere. As usual too, he is rambling and discursive, and much in the essay seems at the present day stale and commonplace. In fact, a great deal of it is a mere *rechauffé* of the Sceptic or Pyrrhonist philosophy as represented in Cicero, or in Sextus Empiricus, of whom a Latin translation by the hand of Henri Estienne had been published in 1562. It may be noticed further that, though Montaigne is virtually engaged in an attack on philosophy, he has not a single reference to any but ancient philosophers. Perhaps he would reply that the philosophy of the Schoolmen being

based upon Church dogmas was not true philosophy; more probably he knew nothing about them, and for him the only philosophy was that of the ancients.

But though we may fairly suppose that Montaigne's pleasure in showing the paces of his favourite steed has betrayed him into a certain amount of exaggeration, there is no doubt that the essay more or less correctly represents his views. The mottoes inscribed on the rafters of his library, still legible at the present day, nearly all refer to the folly and presumption of man, and to the vanity of human life; while on the central beam are the three watchwords of the Pyrrhonist or Sceptic philosophy—*Οὐ καταλαμβάνω* (I do not apprehend), *Ἐπέχω* (I reserve judgment), and *Οὐδέν ὀρίζω* (I define nothing). His well-known motto and device, *Que scay-je?* and a pair of scales, were adopted by him as best representing the Pyrrhonist's position.

It must be admitted that there was much in the condition of human knowledge in Montaigne's day to impress him with a sense of its instability. The discovery of new lands had revolutionised existing ideas on geography; the medical science of Galen and Hippocrates had been assailed and in a great measure corrected by practical experimenters like Vesalius and Paré; even Aristotle, "the master of those who know," had been rudely shaken on his throne by Ramus. But perhaps what more than anything else lent force to Montaigne's argument was the overthrow of the Ptolemaic astronomy by Copernicus. "What are we to infer from this," asks Montaigne, "except that it ought not to matter to us which theory is the true one? Who knows whether a thousand years hence a third opinion will not upset the two preceding ones?"

*Sic volvenda atas commutat tempora rerum.*⁷⁷

Montaigne would have held human knowledge in greater respect had he had more knowledge himself, had his philosophy been based on a deeper

foundation. But he had no adequate conception of what he was attacking; he was unable to estimate the true value of the conquests of human reason, to measure the ground that had been really gained during the march of civilisation. As he often says himself, he was neither a man of profound learning, nor a systematic thinker. He was too indolent to be either, and to this indolence his scepticism was in a great measure due. He delighted in calling up around him an army of doubts, objections, and contradictions, but he had no power, or indeed inclination, to lay the spirits which he had raised. So, to use his own phrase, he rested his head on the "soft pillow" of ignorance, and gave himself up to the repose of the Pyrrhonist *ἀπραξία* or mental imperturbability.

But though his philosophy was little more than a reproduction of that of the Greek sceptics, to his contemporaries it came with the charm of almost novelty. Cornelius Agrippa, it is true, had published in 1530 his famous treatise *On the Uncertainty and Vanity of Sciences and Arts*, but it was written in Latin, and appealed to a comparatively small audience. Though the red-hot enthusiasm of the Renaissance was beginning to cool, men had not ceased to believe in the supremacy of the human intellect; they were still before all things Humanists, and fresh conquests both in science and literature seemed to justify their faith. Hitherto the spirit of free inquiry had been directed solely against traditional dogma; it had not occurred to men that it might be turned against human knowledge itself. One generation had successfully protested against the right of the Church to fetter human inquiry; another generation was beginning to resist the authority of Greek thought which had been set up in place of the Church. But Montaigne pointed out that if there is to be no central authority in science, if free inquiry is to be unlimited, then human knowledge is reduced to a state of perpetual flux; what we believe to-day we may be called

upon to disbelieve to-morrow. What then is the value of your boasted human knowledge?

In England Montaigne was welcomed with hardly less interest than in France. Florio's translation, published in 1603, was doubtless the result rather than the cause of his popularity. Bacon quotes him by name in his first essay (first published in the edition of 1625), and though nothing can be more different from the brilliant garrulity of the French essayist than the austere conciseness of the English one, it is reasonably certain that but for Montaigne Bacon's essays would never have been written.

But the most interesting question in this connection is the relationship of Shakespeare to Montaigne. As is well known, the lines in *The Tempest* (ii. 1) beginning,

I' the commonwealth I would by contraries
Execute all things,

are a paraphrase of a passage in Florio's translation (i. 30). Another parallel, though far less close, is pointed out by Edward Fitzgerald who compares the passage in *Othello* (iii. 3),

Farewell the neighing steed, and the shrill trump,
The spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife,
The royal banner, and all quality,
Pride, pomp and circumstance of glorious war!

with Florio (iii. 12): "The courageous and mind-stirring harmony of warlike music, which at once entertaineth with delight and enflameth with longing both your ears and your mind." The famous lines in *Hamlet*,

There's a divinity doth shape our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will,

are, Mr. Henry Morley thinks, inspired by "My consultation doth somewhat roughly hew the matter, and by its first shew lightly consider the same; the main and chief point of the work I am wont to resign to heaven" (iii. 8).

Indeed a book has been published to show that Shakespeare wrote *Hamlet*

in order to avert from his countrymen the blighting influence of Montaigne's philosophy, and that the character of Hamlet is a close copy of Montaigne. As might be expected the author of this ingenious theory finds a great many parallels between the two writers which an unprejudiced mind would fail to recognise. But some of his instances are indisputable. Thus part of Hamlet's famous monologue is chiefly, as he says, modelled on the speech of Socrates before his judges, part of which runs thus in Florio's version: "If it be a consummation of one's being, it is also an amendment and entrance into a long and quiet night. We find nothing so sweet in life as a quiet rest and gentle sleep, and without dreams" (iii. 12).¹ Indeed the whole speech is strongly suggestive of Montaigne, with whom death was a favourite subject for reflection. Again the lines spoken by Laertes to Ophelia,

For nature, crescent, does not grow alone
In thews and bulk, but, as this temple
waxes,
The inward service of the mind and soul
Grows wide withal,

are evidently suggested by Florio's rendering of a passage of Lucretius quoted by Montaigne in the *Apology of Raimond Sebond*. Moreover there are one or two less close parallels which have not been noticed by Mr. Feis, such as Hamlet's speech, in the scene with the Queen, about "That monster, custom," compared with Montaigne *On Custom* (i. 22), and "Use every man after his desert and who shall escape whipping?" with Montaigne's "Every man deserves hanging ten times in his life." So too the King's speech beginning, "O my offence is rank" is a striking commentary on Montaigne's remark in the essay *On Prayers* (i. 56) that, "A true prayer and a religious reconciliation of ourselves with God are impossible to a soul that is impure and under the domination of Satan."

¹ Comp. also the essay entitled *That to Philosophie is to Learn how to Die*. (i. 19).

It should be noticed that in all the instances in which the parallelism is of words as well as of thought the passage in *Hamlet* does not occur in the first quarto, but only in the second quarto, published in 1604, the year after Florio's translation. But Shakespeare was doubtless well acquainted with Montaigne's book before this, having read it either in the original or in the translation while still in manuscript.¹ It is also not

¹ Florio's translation was entered at Stationers' Hall in 1599. The first quarto of *Hamlet* was published in 1603; it was first acted probably in 1602.

improbable that in creating the character of Hamlet he may have thought of the man who says of himself: "The uncertainty of my judgment is in most occurrences so signally balanced that I would willingly commit it to the decision of chance and the dice." But of one thing at least we may be sure, that in no sort of way was *Hamlet* intended to be a refutation of Montaigne. To Shakespeare Montaigne's book must have been supremely interesting as a revelation of character; and that is after all its chief interest for us.

ARTHUR TILLEY.

THE FORCES OF DISORDER.

It is interesting to note how the evolution of political events and of social questions brings to the front from time to time certain types of men who appear about to play a considerable part in forming the future history of our country. Take, for instance, the atheist of the period. Not the reflective, educated man in independent circumstances who in his West-end club usually frequents the library where he reads comfortably in his easy-chair. Genial among his friends, if rather reserved in expressing his opinions and never thrusting them offensively on others, a good husband, an affectionate father, an excellent citizen, honest in his convictions, however mistaken they may be or pernicious if generally accepted, he is the representative of a class in the upper circles neither numerous nor powerful, and in the religious sense sincerely believing in nothing.

No,—the man of whom we are now about to speak inhabits regions further east in London. He, on the contrary, is the type of a rapidly increasing order which indeed is at present very conspicuous in the large centres of population in Europe and America; he is by no means reserved, he has begun to speak loud, and is going to speak louder still. Thomas Jones is a modern London artisan, half educated and in intelligence somewhat above the average of his fellows. Let us suppose him about eight and twenty: he has been several years married, as are usually men of his station at that age, nor does he see anything imprudent or improvident in his early alliance; and since manhood he has belonged to an East-end Radical club at which he frequently speaks. His ideas of religion are gathered from a strictly secularist journal which sedu-

lously propagates atheism, and has made him a confirmed atheist; his conceptions of politics from the dogmas uttered by obscure imitators of Burns, Tillet, & Co., who lecture at workmen's gatherings and in Hyde Park on Sundays; his notions of society are taken from publications such as the *Mysteries of London* and certain prints which, circulating freely among the lower classes, describe with virtuous indignation, and at the same time great attention to detail, the occasional scandals which are supposed to illustrate everyday life in the upper circles. In his own way he is sincere in his convictions. As in the case of others he has been moulded by his surroundings, and from early childhood they have been vulgar, ugly, and commonplace, with in addition one very special tendency. That is to say, it has been instilled into him that the rich, the well-to-do, those whom his class rather vaguely term aristocrats, are unprincipled, greedy, domineering, and dishonest; that they are worthless drones whose very existence is an anomaly and a wrong, whose positions of ease and luxury are founded on his life of toil, sometimes of struggling penury. Moreover that while the rich enjoy in idleness the results of his labour, they look down on him as a being of inferior order with whom it would be unfit to associate, yet that at the same time they take their stand on a social pedestal of wealth, birth, talent, or rank, to the summit of which he can never attain. But at the base of that pedestal to-day stands Democracy in ever-increasing crowds, always envious, but now sullen, discontented, impatient and working itself into a frame of mind highly pregnant with danger to certain orders of things.

Let us imagine that on a certain

half-holiday Thomas Jones, our atheistical artisan, makes his way to Hyde Park. It is early June and the height of the London season; Nature is as beautiful as she can be in the locality, and society is there gathered in its most bright and joyous mood. As the young man strolls under the park trees, the air is balmy, the summer sun brightens the rich green foliage and glances on the gay colours of the passing crowd. While leaning against the railings of Rotten Row he sees flitting by groups of handsome, happy English girls, well-bred, well-dressed, and well-mounted. Now a young patrician approaches one of the groups, and there is a pause for a few minutes' conversation; kind looks from sweet and pretty faces are bent on him, a few words of greeting, a laugh, and the party passes on. Jones notices how free from care or sorrow are all these faces. They seem almost as high above him, as much beyond his ken, as angels might be compared to ordinary mortals, were they condescendingly to visit this planet. All around there is whatever of aesthetic influence wealth can give: there are ease and contentment, there are youth, beauty, love, pleasure; and Jones, feeling himself for the time almost an outcast, sees before his eyes a social paradise peopled by beings in whose society he can never mingle, enjoying pleasures which he can never share.

The shadows of the trees are now lengthening, evening approaches, and the workman turns towards home, the streets by degrees becoming narrower and more dreary as he gets eastward into the realms of squalor and struggle. Formerly those in the ranks of poverty entertained a sort of contentment with things as they were, owing to a vague belief that in the after life the poor would have a kind of claim for eternal bliss, and there was somewhat of complacency in the thought that the possession of riches did not conduce to future happiness, rather tending indeed the other way. Now however the flood-gates of literature have been thrown

open and the surging torrent carrying along with it its thousand influences for good and evil is sweeping through and permeating the masses, resistless in its course and impossible to check, while it works blindly, governing the intelligence and directing the attention of uneducated English thought. Our imaginary representative of labour finds now no solace in the old belief. "If it is all over with every one after death," he ponders, "why should some classes, who never work, have all the joy of life, and others who do, have all the discomfort and misery? Why should the accident of birth give them an existence such as I have seen to-day and make me a weary, every-day worker? It's all beer and skittles for these aristocrats and nothing but labour for us, the drudges and slaves of society," he muses, recollecting some of the phrases he has heard at Radical meetings and garnishing his reflections with choice expletives peculiar to his class. So he wanders homewards, thinking of his dreary career without sunshine, tone, or colour; sullen and discontented, feeling at war with society, and even wishing for active hostilities.

At last he arrives at a narrow court where is his domicile consisting possibly of a single room, and fortunate he is if he and his family have not to share it with other tenants. The chamber, lit by small windows, is dark and pervaded by a close, damp smell suggestive of the family washing being done at home. The wife, a lean, pale-faced woman bears little traces of any good looks she may ever have possessed; of womanly softness or grace she has none. The children are unkempt, dirty, unwholesome, and as the husband approaches he perceives, without being at all shocked at the discovery, that their mother has been drinking. The draggled female can be somewhat of a termagant if seriously crossed, and would be truly formidable were it not that Jones' idea of settling matrimonial differences is to give Mrs. Jones a sound thrashing, a remedy he

has more than once administered when he has found his helpmate more than usually aggravating. Among such surroundings where is there privacy or retirement? Where is there opportunity for study or culture? Is it wonderful that the man seeks a refuge in the nearest beer-shop? To it accordingly he now repairs, to get savage over his grievances, to exchange sentiments with others of his class, and then to the Radical club later on.

The type of man we have described only hears one side of the question, nor does he care to hear any other. At war with the existing order of things, he does not reflect that society never obliged him to marry or bring children into the world before he could comfortably support a wife and family; he does not remember that large classes above him as to means and position, with a forethought which he was too self-indulgent to employ, postpone marriage until a competence is fairly secured. Nor does he know that the working man has better opportunities and greater facilities for rising in the social scale in England than in any country in Europe. Also that average intelligence combined with good conduct, temperance, industry and thrift will in most cases place him in a position far higher than that in which he was born. Unacquainted with the principles of political economy, he does not see that in proportion as the price of labour is artificially raised the price of the article produced is also raised to the detriment of the consumers, the great bulk of whom themselves belong to the working and poorer classes. Nor is it apparent to the mental vision of Thomas Jones that were the wages of work to be heightened much beyond its market-value at home, the productive industries of England would take wings and fly to other lands, where cheap labour would result in successful competition, tending seriously to depress the manufactures of Great Britain and eventually place the British working man in a much worse position than

that which he at present occupies. He does not see that as long as brain-power and physical force are unequally distributed by Nature's laws, as long as the principle of chance intermingles with the affairs of men, so long will society evolve from its own elements, in some shape and under certain designations, an aristocracy and a democracy. So long also will there be, as a lowest stratum of all, a residuum composed of the thriftless and incompetent, the intellectually feeble, the beggar, the idler, and perhaps for all time, the criminal!

When Thomas Jones, working man and atheist, while leaning against the park railings saw with envious eyes the glittering throng of fashion and beauty rolling by, he no doubt meditated that a victory over such antagonists would be an easy matter; but he was mistaken, and for this reason. Thomas Jones, the socialist, will not have to fight only the noble and the landlord, the banker and the merchant; he must also fight the house-owner, the small capitalist, the shopkeeper, the annuitant, and the city clerk. As a matter of fact, the latter has proved himself to be highly conservative, especially after having laid by some small savings, besides which there is behind these classes a certain vast nondescript body known as the investing public, and all combined, if they were but really combined, could laugh at socialistic threats against property. In truth property has never put forth its full strength, because property has never been so seriously menaced as to feel real alarm; but were actual danger to arise from any socialist, anarchical, or kindred source, the powerful but dormant forces of wealth would speedily unite, organise, and make short work of any movement towards public plunder. For the above reasons it might be premature to consider that property in general is for the present in danger; but can the same be said of every kind of property?

Whether man be found living under

primitive conditions in the tribal state, or in more settled communities subject to the different forms of heathen belief, or under our complicated system of modern civilisation, men of the most opposite racial varieties, professing the most diverse creeds, always display, and always have displayed, in their dealings with each other a paramount instinct which has ever shaped the conduct of the human race. One prominent point stands out clear and unmistakable, invariable as the laws of Nature herself; the history of the world has always proclaimed the same principle that individual rights are nothing more than so many collections of mights, that power always finds justification for taking what power can confer, and that communities which are feeble but wealthy do not permanently retain their wealth in the presence of communities which are powerful but poor.

The present voting power of the British Isles consists of something more than six millions of individuals, about three-fourths of whom are working men, the majority as a rule possessed of no real property, but whose capital lies in their brains and muscles, chiefly in the latter. English democracy is mainly Nonconformist, strongly leavened with atheism; the most influential of its leaders are more or less outspoken atheists, and these men are now questioning rights hitherto deemed sacred and inviolable, among others, for instance, the title to ownership of the soil.

Land is very distinct from all other descriptions of wealth and very unfortunately situated. It is not portable, nor easily transferable; it is encumbered by jointures, family settlements, entails, and testamentary provisions; it is in the hands of a few, but coveted by many. It seems to be therefore the landed proprietors and head landlords of the towns who are bound in their own interests to consider if a dam to stem this torrent can still be created, and by what means.

It may be said and believed by many that however constituted the Parliament of the future may be, democracy triumphant and holding the reins of power, would still be strictly fair, that it would respect the rights of all classes, that the natural sense of justice, added to the respect for the rights of property, which constitute at the same time the foundation of civilised communities and the bond which holds them together, would be a safeguard against a policy of confiscation or anything approaching to it. We rather think there is a fallacy in the above theories, and that they could be blown away like froth before the evidence of history.

In the beginning of the year 1788 how many among the seigneurs or landlords of France, numbering some hundred and fifty thousand, saw their estates in danger? If the events about to take place within five years had been publicly foretold by any one gifted with more than ordinary foresight, would not his statements have been met with a general laugh of incredulity in which even the twenty millions of the unprivileged classes forming democratic France would have joined? Yet before two years were out, the preliminary gambols of the newborn democracy were manifested by the peasantry first making a holocaust of the landlords' game and then burning their houses. When Rousseau brought out his *Contrat Social* the seigneurs laughed it to scorn; but thirty years had hardly passed when French democracy offered up certain of those very seigneurs on the altar of French liberty, and then copies of Rousseau's book were bound in vellum prepared from the skins of the victims, a fact highly significant but also very French. And the patricians of France, those who had escaped assassination or the guillotine, where were they? Ruined, homeless, destitute, and in exile, they were earning their daily bread by daily drudgery in a foreign land.

One year before the outbreak of the American Civil War the Southern

planters, making due allowance for certain climatic and social conditions, were living in a manner much the same as that followed by the well-to-do English landlord on his estate. Few at that time discerned the stupendous calamities which overshadowed them, and none seemed to have thought that their landed property was in danger of being alienated. But before five years had passed these men were crushed and ruined; for although the word confiscation was not applied to the manner in which they lost their estates, they did lose them under a most democratic form of government founded on manhood suffrage. And it should also be remarked that the vanquished class were brought down from affluence and comfort to a state of abject poverty, owing to the system of unblushing official robbery to which they were subjected by that government for some years after the conclusion of the war.

The year before the introduction of Mr. Gladstone's first Land Bill the Irish proprietors, as a body, appeared to show by their indifference to the coming measure that they considered themselves at least as secure in their position as the English landlords now do in theirs. And indeed they had some grounds for confidence. It was felt to be contrary to what Disraeli once called "the sublime instincts of an ancient people," meaning thereby the English people and their government, that interests vested in such a tangible description of property as land should be seriously affected. During the period of Mr. Gladstone's renewed Irish Land Legislation, that gentleman distinctly intimated that should the property of the landlords become in consequence depreciated in value, they would have a just claim for compensation, (Speech in the House of Commons, 22nd July, 1881). He also argued that if, in consequence of his measures, the income of the landlords should be diminished, on the other hand they would gain by having greater security for the receipt of their

lowered rents. Now, let us see in what way these assurances have been fulfilled. Legislation has transformed the owners of the soil into mere rent-chargers on much diminished incomes, without their having even the ordinary rent-chargers' security for the payments of their rents. The Irish rental has been reduced from £12,000,000 net to a nominal £8,000,000; we say nominal, for the landlord is frequently obliged to give large reductions on even judicial rents in order to secure any payment whatever. They have thus been deprived of an annual income which, if capitalised, would amount to the enormous sum of £120,000,000 sterling. They have been deprived of their territorial power, and the selling value of their property has been greatly lowered. The tenant, moreover, is now permitted to sell the goodwill of his landlord's property to the highest bidder, putting the whole of the purchase-money in his own pocket, and selling for his own benefit not only his own improvements, but his landlord's also. Nor did the injustice even end here. While the landlords were surrounded by legislation with such difficulties in the recovery of their rents, that the majority found it next to impossible to exert their legal rights against any combined opposition on the part of the tenants, they were obliged by law still to pay interest on loans and mortgages contracted at a time when the owner had full possession of his property, and they have also to pay the usual government taxes and local imposts, such as income-tax, poor-rates, tithe-rent-charge, county-cess, head rent, quit-rent, &c., under pain of losing the little which was left to them in default of payment. Thus, while the legislature fenced the tenant round on every side with protection in his newly acquired rights, it not only stripped the landlord of a considerable proportion of his income, but rendered it very difficult for him to obtain the remainder. One would think that such a result might have been easily foreseen.

At a time of profound peace, under a settled government, and in a country of enormous wealth, an Act was passed, levelled at a body of loyal and peaceful citizens which can only be described as one of sheer confiscation. One class was spoiled without receiving a penny of compensation, in order to enrich another. The measure in itself may have been right and desirable, but to carry it out at the expense of certain private individuals instead of at the expense of the State, and to do this without a shadow of excuse from imminent public danger or financial embarrassment, was simply to endorse the teaching of the agitators, that the Irish landlords had no right to their property. The Irish tenant henceforth considered that he had the sanction of the State for making every attack in his power on what remained of the landlord's income. He proceeded to do it, with what results we know; and how Mr. Gladstone's assurances were fulfilled, we also know.

But the full and lamentable effects of this legislation have never been generally realised in England, and for this reason. The sufferers belong to a class who above all others shrink from anything like an appeal to public sympathy, and therefore among them there was neither clamour for relief, nor parading of grievances. What they asked for, and thought that they had a right to expect, was that, as on an average about one-third had been taken off their incomes by the action of Government, they should at least be made secure in the receipt of the remainder. For this the State was distinctly answerable; and the amount required should have come out of taxes if it could not be collected in rents. Now, the true position of the Irish landlord was not only that his rents had been cut down by the decrees of the Land Commission, it was that over a large extent of the country owing to the operation of the Plan of Campaign, sustained as it was by the system of Boycotting, he could get no rent whatever in some cases, and in others

he could only receive it by allowing his tenantry and the local Land League to fix whatever amount they thought fit to pay, and to wipe off whatever arrears they chose. After the rebellion of 1798, the Government compensated loyal men for losses sustained during that period of lawlessness. But after the veiled rebellion of the last few years, although the Government had itself intervened to cripple the landlords in their powers and their resources, no compensation was thought of. In such a state of things the Irish landlords, deserted by the Government, surrounded by a hostile population, and exposed on any attempt to assert their rights to the powerful weapon of Boycotting, were brought face to face with actual bankruptcy, and many sank into destitution. The blow, however, fell with the most terrible effect on an unfortunate class, who, though not actual landowners, drew their incomes from land. These persons were chargeants of various kinds, mortgagees, the holders of jointures, etc. Many of the above were ladies with families depending on them, many were advanced in years, others were absolutely unable to work owing to failing health. Irish ladies of good social position, and once in possession of regularly paid incomes, were suddenly confronted by absolute ruin, and their relations or friends, who might otherwise have helped them, being in much the same condition, they found themselves houseless, penniless, and starving. Some hid themselves in garrets and cellars, where in bitter want they endured cold and hunger; some tried to sustain life by needlework; others, under assumed names, found a refuge in the workhouse, a society among workhouse beggars, and a last refuge in the pauper's grave. Nor was this all. It is a fact that in the asylum of the poor-house were found Irish ladies for whom the appalling nature of such a change in the conditions of life had proved too much: the shock of misfortune had vanquished reason; and, perhaps we

should say mercifully, they no longer knew what they had been or what they were.

It is not to be supposed, and we do not suppose, that when Mr. Gladstone made the speeches to which we have referred, he deliberately tried to deceive the Irish landlords, or that he anticipated the ruin to which they were destined. At the same time we consider certain questions may fairly be asked. Did the British nation through its chosen representative give certain pledges to the landlords? Have those pledges been redeemed? Has the property of certain loyal citizens been confiscated without compensation? If these questions must be answered in the affirmative, we would now ask, have the English people shown themselves true to the characteristics of their race? Where is the evidence of the sublime instincts which Disraeli admired so much or of the English sense of justice and fair play? Is it in fact true, or not true, that loyal British subjects were subjected to spoliation, and reduced to ruin, for no other reason than because they were too feeble to defend themselves?

We have dealt in detail with this painful subject because it is our desire to portray distinctly the treatment which a certain class has met with from the English democracy, there being to all intents and purposes no difference in race or religion between the spoilers and the spoiled. We think also that on this point there are certain facts which must be carefully weighed and considered. For instance, it is now incontestable that English democracy is fast pushing its way to political power, the old balance of parties has changed, and its centre has moved considerably to the left. This question must therefore present itself to the English and Scotch landholders; are they justified in supposing that they will meet with much gentler treatment during the arrangement of certain land-measures which the Radical party now propose, than was

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accorded to their fellow landlords and kinsmen in Ireland?

The English resident landlord on his country estate has made himself deservedly popular. This fact, however, as the last few years' elections show, does not prevent the working man's vote going against him, at all events to a very considerable extent. In the cities and towns this feeling is naturally much more intense. Being completely out of touch, and by no means in sympathy with the landlord, he feels to him much as the orthodox Spaniard felt four hundred years ago to the Spanish Israelite, when in 1492 he gave his Semitic countryman a very peremptory order to leave the country at four months' notice, accompanied by another very peremptory order to leave his gold and silver behind him.

The present drift of political events therefore indicates that a future House of Commons may contain a majority of members returned by working men, representatives of a vast industrial voting-power possessing little either of wealth or land, while other interests, which have most of the wealth and the bulk of the land, are in a powerless and hopeless minority.

From the days of the Greek and Roman Republics until now a marked difference has always manifested itself between legislative assemblies constituted by a mere popular vote and those independent of it. The former are much more likely to be hurried away by sudden and vehement gusts of passion and feeling; they want calmness of deliberation, are wanting also in a sense of responsibility, and are less likely than the latter to consider impartially the rights of minorities, or the various remote issues often involved. It is therefore extremely probable that a working-man's Parliament would be very much disposed to enact measures not only hasty and ill-considered, but also one-sided, and eventually in a national point of view disastrous.

"We will whittle away at the landlord's property until there is nothing

left to whittle." Such were the words of an Irish agitator when dealing with the land-question in a speech which had at all events the merit of frankness. This policy was carried out and has been to a large extent successful, so much so indeed that it will be continued in any future agitation against the system of land-tenure in this country. We do not consider as a matter of fact that any very sweeping measure would be successfully carried through in a session, but an invasion of proprietorial rights might be effected by gradual steps all tending in the same direction. For instance, the present law of trespass on private property might be altered, the right to preserve game might be cancelled, an allotment-bill much more in favour of the aspiring owner than the present Act might be carried; all these measures would certainly tend to drive the landlord from his estate; a residence in London or on the Continent might have by degrees more allurements for the class, and absenteeism would become very frequent.

Up to the present time the presence of the English country gentleman has with rare exceptions been an important and beneficial factor in country life. Upright, honourable, and straightforward in his dealings, genial and kindly to those with whom he comes into contact, he as a rule gains their respect and esteem. A good type of a well-bred Englishman, his house is usually a centre of culture and refinement from which radiate through other strata of society influences tending to bring out the best points of the national character. Would it be well for rural England that this class should be driven from its present position, and that the ancient manor-houses of our country should be tenanted by caretakers instead of by the squire's families? Yet this is what would happen in certain contingencies; for once take away the attractions of a country life, and the halls of the landlords would speedily be deserted. How and where the

change would benefit the masses, we do not see; but we do see very clearly how disastrously it would, in the long run, affect the working democrat himself.

The English land-holder holds some very strong cards in his hands if he only knew how to play them, and if, taking experience as his guide, he would be warned by the errors and avoid the fate of the Irish landlords. He may put forth as his programme something of this kind. "If the voting power and the general voice of the nation should indeed decide it to be expedient that our inheritance should change hands, be it so; but on what principle of justice or expediency can the landlord's property pass from those who have purchased it or who have fairly inherited it, into the hands of the tenants who have done neither and who have no title whatever to it? If there is to be some gradual legislative process equivalent to confiscation but veiled under some other name to save appearances, let that legislation tend to throw the property into the hands of the State and not into the hands of individuals. Should private ownership in land be indeed an evil, then the evil is multiplied and perpetuated by creating many proprietors instead of a few, and the condition of the non-holders of land would remain assuredly not better than before." Were a firm attitude assumed on this point by the landed proprietors as a class it would throw the great body of the tenant-farmers on their side, more especially as the latter are as a rule well contented with their position and their instincts are already against socialism. There was sense in the Roman adage, *Divide et impera*, and were the landowners to bear it in mind they might strengthen their own position while disintegrating the forces of their enemy. Again, the landlord may say: "If I am to be made the victim of public plunder, and by some process, call it what you will, my property is to go to the State, why should the

principle be applied to my property only? Must it not eventually come to be applied to house-properties in cities and towns?" Here he would argue most justly; and be it remembered the victim threatened will not be only the owner of blocks of houses in wealthy districts, he will be also the small speculator, the representative of a great mass who have employed their moderate savings, often the result of a life's labour, in buying a small plot of land and building thereon a few houses; this process forming by degrees most of our country towns and villages. Moreover, if the owner of land and the town-landlord are to be plundered, most assuredly the principle would shortly after be applied to the owner of mines, who at present holds this species of property by the same title as that by which the land-holder holds his land. "Confiscate if you will," the landlord may say; "but be assured that once commencing with me and mine this peculiar system of legislation will not end there, and the question must eventually arise, 'Where will it end? Who is safe?'"

It is a great mistake to suppose that the security of landed property is a matter which concerns only landlords. It does not indeed much concern the artisan, but it deeply concerns all the classes which invest money in great or small amounts, from the millionaire down to the country shopkeeper. Not only have

private individuals, usually of the middle and lower classes, largely invested in mortgages on landed property, but this has always been a favourite security with Insurance Companies and similar undertakings, in whose prosperity hundreds of thousands, for the most part also belonging to the middle and lower classes, are interested. Were the rights of property in English land to be invaded by an agitation such as has been so terribly successful in Ireland, the movement would be fraught with the direst consequences to many who have never owned and do not wish to own a foot of soil.

In Ireland the land-holding class, few, feeble, and betrayed by the government to which they looked for the maintenance of the rights of property, have mostly suffered in silence and unmarked. But in England it will be very different, and the first serious menace to the rights of property in general will awaken a host of defenders from the midst of the English democracy itself. It seems, then, that the landed interest is still potentially a great factor in the State; but it should organise its strength and marshal its forces, bringing into harmony with itself the multiplicity of disjointed interests which indirectly belong to it. It is menaced by danger; but the danger might disappear before consolidation and union, if effected in time.

C. R.

THE BHUT-BABY.

"ACCORDING to established precedent it is reported, under section so-and-so, that one Buddha Singh of Kidderjana having died, his rightful heirs inherit." The court-reader's voice hurried the liquid Urdu syllables into long, sleepy cadences like the drone of a humble-bee entangled in the swaying punkah overhead. Backwards and forwards, rising and falling, the rhythm seemed to become part of me, until the colourless reports were a monotonous lullaby, and each wave of sound and motion bore me further from earth, nearer to the land of dreams. Ah! if the right people always inherited, and my old uncle received ticket-of-leave from the gout, I might afford furlough, and stand once more on that big boulder at the foot of the One-stone pool waiting for a new ring of light to show on the dark eddy by the far side; a ring with a swirl and a gleam of silver scales in the centre, a tightening line under the finger, till the reel went whirr-rr-rr-rr! It was a lovely dream while it lasted.

"According to established precedent the canal-officer reports, under section so-and-so, that certain rebellious persons in Chori-pani have opened the sluices of the cut, and taken water that did not belong to them." The heather-sweet breeze off the One-stone pool ceased to blow, and I was back, with the punkah, in the humanity-laden atmosphere of the court-house, where even the mosquitoes were glutted, and the lizards, hanging head downwards on the wall, looked as if they had congestion of the brain. Stealing water! Poor wretches, who could blame them with their crops withering in the June sun and the sluice-doors within reach! Even a juicy apple on a hot day is irresistible,

despite Farmer Smith's big dog watching from below, while you sit on the lower branch, and Jerry sits on the upper, eating all the ripe fruit just to pass the time, and thanking Providence meanwhile for making you Christian children in a cider-country!

"According to established precedent it is reported, under section so-and-so, that the devil was born three days ago in village Hairan-wallah. Orders are requested. Meanwhile the *chowkidar* [watchman] remains watching the same." Startled into wakefulness I looked sharply to see if the reader had not been nodding in his turn; but my alertness merely produced a respectful iteration of the paragraph which showed all too clearly my subordinate's explanation of the sudden display of attention.

The suspicion of sleep is always irritating. "*Sarishtadar!*" [clerk of the court] I began in English, "what the devil?" "Nossir," interrupted the reader suavely in the same language, "pardon the suggestion, sir, but *the* devil is somewhat free translation, sir. In dictionary *bhut* (the word used, sir,) equals an *indefinite* devil, thus *a* devil, *a* fiend, *a* imp—pardon the indiscretion, sir! an imp."

A glow of proud humility at his own quick detection of these trivial errors filled up the pause which followed, while the punkah went on swinging and I sat wondering if I were asleep or awake. Finally the *sarishtadar* dipped his pen in the ink, fluttered the superfluous moisture on the carpet, and suggested deferentially that the *chowkidar* was waiting for orders. A sudden curiosity as to what his self-complacent brain, surcharged with Western culture, would do with the situation made me reply curtly, "The usual orders."

I managed to forbear laughing in the grave face raised to mine in deprecating apology. "I am unable, sir," he said after a pause, "to recall, at the present moment, any section, penal or civil, suitable to occasion. Would you kindly jog memory, sir, by suggesting if it is under judicial or administrative heads? Or perhaps," he added, as a bright after-thought, "it is political job." Then, I regret to say, I went off into yells of unseemly mirth, as most Englishmen have to do at times over the portentous solemnity of the Aryan brother.

There was a stir in the verandah, a sudden waking to renewed effort on the part of the punkah-coolie resulting in a general breeziness. Or was it that Terence O'Reilly, our young Irish doctor, as he came in to the darkened court, brought with him a thought of fresh air, a remembrance of Nature in her sunniest, most lovable moods? He invariably suggested such things to me at any rate, and as he paused in astonishment at my indecorous occupation, I thought once more that it was a pleasure simply to look at him. His face sympathised promptly with the unknown joke. "Whwæt the divvle are ye laughing at,—me?" he asked in a rich brogue as he seated himself astride a chair; in which equestrian position his dandy costume for polo showed to great advantage.

Nero fiddling over the flames of Rome is sympathy itself compared to the indifference with which we often speak the first lines of a coming tragedy in every-day life. So it was with a jest that I introduced Terence O'Reilly to the existence of the *bhut*-baby, and in so doing became instantly aware that he surpassed me in other things besides good looks. He could scarcely be said to become grave, for to lose brightness would have been to lose the essence of the man, but his expression grew to a still more vivid reflex of his mind. "Twill be one of those poor little craytures that come into this world God knows why," he said with an in-

finite tenderness of voice. "Ten to wan 'tis better it should die, fifty to wan I can do nothing to help it, but I'll ride over and see annyhow."

The *sarishtadar* laid aside his pen somewhat mournfully, the practical being out of his line; while I, smitten by admiration into immediate regret at my own indifference, murmured something about having thought of going over next morning.

"There's no time loike the present, my dear fellow," he replied buoyantly. "The pony's at the door, and sure I'm got up for riding annyhow;" and as he spoke he stretched out his long legs, and surveyed their immaculate boots and breeches critically.

"And what will your team do without their best forward?" I asked, feeling a certain captiousness at his prompt decision.

"Get along with your blarney! Sure it's practising, and you can take my place at that anny day; indeed 'twas to fetch you I ventured into the dock, for whin I caught a glimpse of your face at the jail this morning I said to meself, 'Terence, me bhoy, that's a case of polo, or blue pill, for by the powers his liver's not acting.' So 'twas to hound you into exercise I came annyhow."

A feverish desire to amend and excuse my own lukewarmness shot up through the loophole his words afforded. "To tell the truth I *was* feeling a bit slack; but if you'll wait five minutes while I slip over to the bungalow and change my clothes, I'll ride with you to Hairanwallah. It will be better for me than polo; I might get over-heated, you know."

"'Tis over-eating, not over-heating that's the matter with you, me bhoy," he replied coolly; "but I'm proud,—and by the powers!" he added, starting up in great excitement, "you shall ride my pony; I call him Blue Pill, for he's better than wan anny day; and while you're dressing I'll send me *ayce* round for the Lily of Killarney. I've a bet on her at the *gymkhana* next Monday, and we'll try her on the quiet against the stable."

Half an hour afterwards I was enjoying plenteous exercise, and it seemed to me far behind as if the Lily, a great black beast without a single white hair on her, was trying to buck Terence over into the saffron-coloured horizon, as she went along in a series of wild bounds. He came back to me, however, after a time, as fresh as paint; but the mare with head down and heaving flanks appeared to have had enough of it.

"'Tis a pity the faymale sex is so nervous," he said casually. "Ye can't hold 'em responsible for annything; but if it wasn't for hysteria they'd be angels entirely. She has the paces of wan, annyhow."

Fourteen miles of constant canal-cuts, that were a perpetual joy to the doctor and a terror to me, brought us to Hairan-wallah, a large village standing among irrigated fields. Here cautious inquiries for the devil led us to a cluster of mud huts beyond the pale, where the low-caste servants of the community dwelt apart. Before reaching it we were joined by the head-men and their followers all anxious to explain and excuse the calamity which had befallen their reputation; but as the fear of evil eye had prevented any of them from personally inspecting the fiend, the accounts of its appearance were wildly conflicting. The doctor, indeed, refused to listen to them, on the ground that it was sheer waste of time, and rode along affably discussing the crops with an aged patriarch. His manner changed, however, when we were requested to dismount, and he led the way into the enclosure where, guarded by the police *chowkidar*, the devil-baby lay awaiting Government orders. The court-yard was hung round with coloured threads, old iron, and other devices against witchcraft, and a group of low-caste men and women were huddled up dejectedly in one corner. So far the crowd followed us, but when some of the reputed relations showed us into a dark out-house at the further end, even curiosity failed to prevent a visible hanging-back.

Blinded by the change from the glare outside I could at first see nothing but my companion's tall form bending over a bundle of rags on a low stool, beside which a half-naked hag sate chanting a guttural charm, and before I regained clearer sight his voice rang out in tones of evident relief, "By the powers! 'tis only a black albino."

The bull was perfect, seeing that it conveyed succinctly a very accurate description. The *bhut-baby* was a black, a very black albino, for the abnormal colouring was confined to its hair, which was unusually well developed and grew in tight clustering curls over its head like a coachman's wig. The faint eyebrows and eyelashes were also white, and the result, if not devilish, was extremely startling. For the rest, it was as fine a man-child as ever came to gladden a mother's heart. I deemed it asleep till I saw the doctor bend closer, and then raise the eye-lid in keen professional scrutiny.

"Where's the mother?" he cried, turning like lightning on the nearest male relative, and seizing him by the scruff of the neck in order to emphasise his words. "Bring her at once, or I'll go inside and fetch her myself. The child has been left to starve," he added rapidly in English, "and it's nigh dead of neglect. You're a magistrate! Make them bring the devil of a mother here at once, or it will die."

But they met my commands and remonstrances with frightened obstinacy, asserting after some hesitation that the mother was dead, had died virtuously of shame at bringing such disgrace to her people. I had every reason to believe this statement was a lie, but no means of proving it to be one, for of course the whole village favoured it.

Then there came to Terence O'Reilly's face a look that was good to see but not to endure. "And if the poor little creature has lost its own mother," he cried in that strong round voice of his, "are there no other women among you all with the

milk of kindness in their breasts that will give it a drink for the sake of the time when they took suck themselves? Look at it! What are you all frightened of? 'Tis as fine a babe as a woman could bear. Only the white hair of it, and God knows we shall all come to that if we are spared. Look at it, I say! Handle it, and see for yourselves!"

Suiting the action to the word he lifted the infant in his arms and carried it out to the lingering light of day, among the crowd which fell back in alarm from him and his burden. He did indeed look somewhat of an avenging angel with his face ablaze with indignant appeal. There was a scuttling from behind as some of the head-men tried to force a sweeper-woman to the front, but ere they succeeded she had promptly gone into hysterics and so roused a murmur of disapprobation and dismay among the rest. Her shrieks brought Terence back to earth, and ceasing to hold the child at arm's length as if offering it for acceptance, he turned to me once more. "At least your magistracy can make them bring me milk. If ye can't even do that, then God help the British rule!"

Stung by the sarcasm I exerted myself to such an extent, that three separate head-men arrived breathless at the same moment with large *lotahs* full of nourishment for the devil, or any one else on whom the Presence was foolish enough to bestow it. So much lay within their conceptions of duty.

The scene which followed will linger in my memory until memory itself ceases to be. Terence in polo-costume seated on a string bed under the darkening skies with the devil on his lap, feeding it methodically with the corner of his pocket-handkerchief moistened in the milk held by three trembling *lambadars*. Beside him the Presence, with, thank God, sufficient vitality left for admiration. And round about a cloud of awe-struck witnesses, wondering at his audacity, doubtful of its effect on the future.

"Sure 'tis the first toime I ever did dhry-nurse," he remarked after a long silence, during which I became absorbingly interested in the little imp's growing desire for life. "Hark to that, now! The ungrateful divvle's wanting to cry just becase it's got something to digest, as if that wasn't the firrst duty of a human stomach. Great Moses! don't ye think it's time you stepped in as ripresentative of the Kaiser-i-Hind, and took things in hand a bit? Ah, it's after having dill-water ye are now, is it? Whisht, whisht, whisht now!"

He walked up and down, the crowd swaying from him, as he dandled the infant with what seemed to me marvellous skill, while I did my best to argue sense into the dull brains of the villagers. I was quite unsuccessful, of course, and after many words found myself, as before, with two courses open to me, either to leave the *bhut-baby* where it was, or give it in charge of the head-men; the one a swift, the other a more tardy certainty of death from that mysterious disease called "By the cause of not drinking milk properly" which figures so largely in the records of infant mortality in India; the former for choice, since, as Terence remarked, "It would save trouble to kill it at the beginning instead of the end of its life."

"So the magistracy can do nothing," he said at last; "thin I will. *Chowkidar!* take this baby to the head-quarter's hospital. I'm master there, annyhow, and I'll make it anny case I please, and dye its hair, an' no man shall say me nay!"

So the *chowkidar* was ordered to carry the devil to hospital to be cured of its devilry, and we rode home in frantic haste because Terence was engaged to sing *Killaloe* that evening in barracks. Some of the relations ran about a mile after us yelling out blessings for having removed the curse from them.

Six weeks after I saw an atrocious hag nursing a white-haired infant in the doctor's own compound, and ques-

tioned him on the subject. "The fact is," he said ruefully, "it gave fits to the patients. I tried shaving its head, but it grew so fast and the white eyelashes of it betrayed the cloven hoof. And dye wouldn't stick on; so I've hired a harridan on two rupees a month to look after it under my own eye."

There was, no doubt, something of combativeness in this particular instance of Terence O'Reilly's charity; but the *bhut*-baby was by no means the only pensioner on his bounty. The row of mud houses beyond the cook-room was filled with the halt, the maimed, and the blind; especially the latter, for the fame of his infinite skill and patience as an eye-doctor was spreading far and wide. Besides, he had the secret, possessed by some Englishmen unconsciously, of inspiring the natives with absolutely unbounded devotion, and many of his patients would literally have laid down their lives for him, among others his bearer, a high-caste Brahman. The man, who had originally come to him for blindness of long standing had, on recovery, made his way straight from hospital to the doctor's house and announced his intention of serving him till death. "What are hands, and feet, or brain," he answered calmly to all objections, "if they have not eyes to guide them? Therefore are they all predestined since all time to be servants to my Lord the Light-bringer for ever and ever."

Treated at first as a joke, Shivdeo's determination had outlived opposition, and at the time of the *bhut*-baby's advent he had achieved his intention of becoming trusted personal attendant to the "Light of the World," for, without some such allusion to the benefit he had received at his hands, he never spoke of his master. The introduction of a baby pariah to begin with, and a devil to follow, brought about a temporary disturbance of his office; for he was haughty with all the pride of his race, and superstitious beyond belief. But after a week of

dismissal consequent on failing to provide the harridan with proper milk for the bottle, Shivdeo, almost blind again with fruitless tears, crept back to the Light-Giver's feet and swore a big oath to feed the low-caste demon himself if thereby he might return to the only life he could live. He kept his promise of strict neutrality to the letter, never by word or deed showing his aversion to the child, affecting indeed not to see it with those mild, short-sighted eyes of his. Yet, as it grew older, he must often have been brought into contact with the child, for it would crawl after the doctor like a dog. Despite the peculiarity of its silvery curls and pale blue eyes, it was really pretty, and by the time it was two years old had picked up such a variety of comical tricks and odd ways, that Boots, as we called it, became quite an institution with the doctor's friends. We used to send for it to the verandah and laugh at the silent agility with which it tumbled for sweetmeats and the equally silent quickness of its mimicry, for to all intents and purposes the child was dumb. Beyond a very rare repetition of the feeble wail I had first heard from it in the doctor's arms at Hairanwallah, it made no articulate sound whatever; but once or twice when we tired of it and forgot its presence, I have heard a purring noise like a cat, and looking down, found that the little creature was curled up with its silver curls resting on the doctor's foot in perfect content. He spent many hours in demonstrating its full possession of all five senses, and always declared it would speak in time; certainly if speech went by intelligence it would have been the most eloquent of babies. As it was, its unusual silence undoubtedly added to its uncanny appearance, and helped to strengthen the still lingering belief in its devilish origin. As long, however, as Terence O'Reilly's voice gave the orders for its well-being, not a soul in his compound or elsewhere would have dreamt of disobedience. Indeed it often

struck me that poor little Boots lived by virtue of his exuberant vitality, and by nothing else.

I remember one evening we had been screaming with laughter over the comical little creature's mimicry of Shivdeo's stately short-sighted way of bringing in whisky and soda-water. The applause seemed to get into the baby's brain, and it took us off one after the other with such deadly truth, that we nearly rolled off our chairs. Then some one suggested that we should ask it to imitate Terence, who happened to be absent; and when it failed to respond, a young subaltern, thinking it had not understood, came out with a fair copy of the doctor's round, rich brogue. We were all startled at the result; the child made for the speaker like a wild beast, stopped suddenly, then crept away with silent tears brimming up into its eyes. I think we all felt a bit ashamed, especially when Terence, coming in from a patient, found Boots curled up asleep in a damp corner by the *tattie* and, with a mild rebuke that, "Twas enough to give the poor little crayture fayver an' ague," lifted the child in his arms, and proceeded to carry it across the garden to its harridan. But he had hardly raised it before Shivdeo, gliding in like a ghost from heaven knows where, came forward and took the child from him with a rapid insistence that left me wondering. So, when the man brought me my parting cheroot, I questioned him on his interference. He looked startled for a moment; then replied gravely that it was not meet for the Light of the Universe to bear a sweeper's child in his bosom. "Nor is it meet for a Brahman either," I returned, feeling sure he had some other reason. The man's eyes flashed before they dropped submissively: "Nor is it meet for a Brahman to serve; but the Presence knows that this slave cares not if he wakes as a dog so that the Lord of Light remains to give sight to the blind."

Shortly after this Boots sickened

for some childish complaint in the course of which pneumonia developed, making it hover for a day or two between this world and the next. Once more Terence stood between the *bhut*-baby and the shadow of death, and had it been the heir of princes, the resources of modern science could not have been more diligently ransacked for its benefit. Indeed the doctor looked quite worn out when I met him one morning, going, as he said, to give himself a fresher by taking the Lily round the steeple-chase course.

"You're over-working, Terence," said I, noting his fine-drawn clearness of feature; "up all night after Boots (I'm glad to hear the little fellow's better by the way), and Blue Pill waiting for you day after day till after dark at the hospital gates; to say nothing of *gynkhanas*. It won't do for long; I'm serious about it, old chap."

"Are you? Well, it's kind of you to be that," he laughed; "though maybe 'twould be more of a change for your friends if you were the t'other thing. Don't fret yourself about me, anyhow; I'm well enough. Maybe 'tis having done dhry-nurse to him at first that makes me feel Boots on me mind; but I think he's well through. And d'ye know! the little beggar wouldn't touch a thing unless I gave it him. 'Tis a queer place this world, anyhow."

His voice had a suspicion of a break in it, and his eyes were brighter than ever; whence I augured that he felt worse than he cared to confess. Next day he sent a note asking me to inspect the jail for him, as he was going to try conclusions with his liver; the day after I found him in bed, but lively. Then the deadly fever which kills so many fine young fellows in India laid fast hold on him, and for three long weeks we, who loved him, watched the struggle for life, helpless to do aught save keep up his strength as best we might against the coming crisis. It was as if a

calamity had befallen the whole Station. Men when they met each other asked first of all how *he* was; and women sent jellies and soups enough for a regiment to the bungalow where the young doctor, who had soothed so many of their troubles, lay bravely fighting out his own. Quite a crowd of natives gathered round the gate by early dawn, waiting for news of the past night; and, so far as I knew, Shivdeo never left the verandah during all those weary days. I could see him from my post by the bed, sitting like a bronze statue against a pillar, whence my slightest sign would rouse him. For I assumed the office of head-nurse after Terence, full of gratitude for the kindly offers of help showered upon him, had said with a wistful gleam of the old mischief, "But I loike your sober face best, old man; it makes me feel so pious." I sent in for leave that morning and never left him again.

It was the twenty-sixth day, about ten o'clock in the evening, that the doctor in charge shook his head over my patient sorrowfully. "He is terribly weak, but while there's life,—We shall know by dawn."

The old formula fell on my ears, though I had been waiting for it with a sense of sickening failure, and unable to reply, I turned away from the figure which lay so still and lifeless despite all my care. As I did so I noticed Shivdeo listening with eyes and ears at the door. For the last three days the man had been strangely restless, and more than once I had discovered odd things disposed about the room, and even on poor Terence's pillow; things used as talismans to keep away the evil eye, such as I had seen in Hairan-wallah when the *bhut-baby* was born; and I had smiled,—good heavens, how ignorant we are in India!—smiled at the silly superstition which evidently lingered in Shivdeo's mind. He came to me when the doctor left to ask if he had understood rightly that the great hour of hope or dread drew nigh. I told him

we should know by dawn, and that till then all must be quiet as the grave. His face startled me by its intensity, as standing at the foot of the bed he fixed his eyes on the unconscious face of his master and *salaamed* to it with all the reverence he would have given to a god. But he spoke calmly to me, saying that as I would doubtless be loth to leave the room he would order the servants to bring me something to eat there. He presently appeared, bearing the tray himself, giving as a reason for this unusual service his desire to avoid any disturbance. It was just upon twelve o'clock when, with Shivdeo's help, I gave Terence, who was quite unconscious, a few drops of stimulant before sitting down with a sinking heart to my anxious watch. It was early April, and the doors, set wide open to let in the cool air, showed a stretch of moonlit grass where shadows from the unseen trees above quivered and shifted as the night-wind stirred the leaves. In the breathless silence I could hear even the faint respiration of the sick man, and found myself counting its rise and fall, until the last thing I remembered was Shivdeo's immovable figure with the moonlight streaming full in his face.

When I awoke the rapid eastern dawn had come. The sparrows were twittering in the verandah and Shivdeo stood by his master's bed holding his finger to his lips. "Hush!" he whispered, as my eyes met his; "the light has brought life to the Giver of Light."

It must have been the sound of wheels which woke me, for ere I had time to reply the doctor entered the room, and after a glance at his patient shook me silently by the hand. "I believe he's through," he said, when he had cautiously examined the sleeping man; "fever gone, pulse stronger. I scarcely dared to hope for it even with his splendid constitution. *Hullo! what's that?*" It was only a tiny spot of blood on the forehead just where the trident of Shiva is painted

by his worshippers, but it showed vividly against the pallor of the skin.

"There is a little spot by the Light-Giver's feet also," remarked Shivdeo quietly. "I noticed it yesterday just after the Presence cut his hand with the soda-water bottle." And sure enough there was one.

"I can't think how I came to fall asleep," I said to him after the doctor had gone; "just at the critical time, too, when I was most wanted."

The man smiled. "We do not always guess aright when we are wanted, *Huzoor*. You slept and the Light-Giver got better. It is God's way; He has refreshed you both."

"Refreshed!" I retorted crossly. "I feel as if I had been pounded in a mortar. I had the most frightful dreams, but I can't recall what they were."

"It is not well to try," replied Shivdeo, with rather an odd look. "If I were the Presence I would forget them. There is enough evil to come without recalling what is past and over for ever."

Perhaps involuntarily I followed his suggestion, for, though I chased the fleeting memory more than once through my brain, I never overtook it.

Terence O'Reilly made a quick recovery; but in view of the fast approaching hot weather, the doctors put him on board ship as soon as it could be done with safety. Hurry was the order of the day, so it was not until my return from seeing him to Bombay that I found time for outside affairs. Then it was that Shivdeo informed me of poor little Boots' death in the interval. As the Presence was aware, he said, it had been thought advisable when perfect quiet was necessary to the Light-Bringer to send the child away from the compound, because of the difficulty experienced in keeping it out of the house. So it had gone with its nurse to the cantonment-sweeper's hut, where it had caught fresh cold and died. By the advice of the native doctor who had seen it, he had kept

the death secret at first, from fear of the news delaying his master's recovery. I made every inquiry, but found nothing of any kind to give rise to suspicion of foul play. The native doctor had sent medicine three days running as for bronchitis, and on the fourth he had seen the child's dead body. It had died, he thought, of croup.

"You will write and tell the Light-Bringer!" asked Shivdeo when the inquiry was over. "And you will say that I did my best, my very best, for my lord's interest?"

"Certainly," I replied; "but he will be sorry, the child was so fond of him."

"When people are beautiful as Krishna like the Lord of Light it is easy to be fond of them."

I did not see Shivdeo again for over three months, and the bungalow in the Civil Lines, which he kept swept and garnished against his master's return, gradually assumed the soulless, empty appearance peculiar to the dwelling-places of those who make holiday at the other side of the world. Then a message came to say that he was ill, and wished to see me on business. I found him, a mere wreck and shadow of his former self, propped up against his old pillar in the verandah. He shook his head over my suggestions of remedies. "I have taken many," he replied quietly, "for the native doctor is my caste-brother. The hand of Shiva is not to be turned aside, and am I not his sworn servant? What ails me? Nay, who can say what ails the heart when it ceases to beat? Men cannot live without the light, and it is night for me now. Perhaps that is it, who knows? Yonder old man is my father come to see me die; yet ere the last 'Ram-Ram' sounds in mine ears I want the Presence to understand something; else would I not have vexed his quiet. It will be hard for the *Huzoor* to understand, because he is not of our race."

He paused so long that I asked what he wished me to understand,

thinking that in his weakness he had drifted away from his desire. "Something new and strange," he answered, "yet old and true. See! I sit here in the old place, and the Presence shall sit there as he used to do, because old memories return in the old places, making us see and remember things that are past or forgotten. Is it not so?"

Truly enough, as I humoured him by occupying the familiar chair, ready placed half-way between the bed and the window, it seemed to me as if I were once more watching Terence pass through the valley of the shadow.

"The Presence once slept in that chair," continued the weak voice, "and he dreamed a dream. Let him recall it now, if he can."

How or wherefore I know not, but as he spoke a sudden certainty as to what he wished me to know rushed in on me. "Great God," I cried, starting up and seizing him roughly by the shoulder, "you killed poor little Boots! You brought the child here! You killed it before his very eyes and mine! I know it! I think,—I think I saw it done!"

He set my hand aside with unexpected force and a strange dignity. "I am the prisoner of Death, *Huzoor!* There is no need to hold me; I cannot escape him. For the rest, if I killed the child, what then? The Lord of Light lives and that is enough for me. What is a Sudra or two more or less to the Brahman? But what if it was a devil sucking his heart's blood because of his beauty? Shall I not have honour for saving him? Thus both ways I am absolved; but not from my oath, the false oath which I swore to my lord for my own sake. When I wander through the shades waiting for Vishnu's decree, it will lead my blind steps to the body of a foul thing. So I speak that the Presence may judge and say if I were not justified, and confess that we people of the old knowledge are not always wrong. *Huzoor!* you have seen its eyes glisten, as its body clung to his beauty; you

know he sickened after it had lain night and day in his arms; you know how it crept and crawled to get at him while he lay helpless. Now listen! One day he was better, brighter in all things, and bid you refresh yourself in the air. I sat here, and like you I fell asleep; and when I woke the thing was at him, close to his heart, its arms round his neck, its devilish lips at his throat, crooning away like an accursed cat! And he was in the death sleep that lasted till the dawn came that you and I remember so well. Then I knew it must be, and that my oath was as a reed in the flood. Yet would I not be hasty. I took counsel with holy men, men of mighty wisdom, men with such tenderness for life that they bid God speed to the flea which keeps them wakeful; but they all said, 'Yea! one of the two must die.' Did I stop to ask which? Not I. So I fasted, and prayed, and made clean my heart, and waited patiently for the moment of fate; for so they bid me. Even then, *Huzoor*, the holy men would do naught by chance or without proof. It was a bright moonlight night and the Presence slept by reason of our arts and drugs; and so we put the cursed creature we had brought from the sweeper's hut down at the gate, yonder by the flowering oleanders, and hiding ourselves among them, watched it. Straight, straight as a hawk or a bustard, until we found it there in the old place! Devil of Hell! we made it vomit back the blood, we——"

My hand was on his mouth, my one thought to stop the horrible words that somehow conjured up the still more horrible sight before my eyes. "I know,—there is no need for more, —I cannot bear it."

And indeed, the vision of poor dumb little Boots in their relentless hold froze my blood. As my hands fell away from him in sudden, shrinking horror, he looked at me compassionately. "The Presence does not understand aright. Let him remember the strange doctor's face when he

came in the dawn, thinking to find hope had fled. One of the two had to die. If the Presence had thought as I did, as I *knew*, what would he have done?"

I was silent.

His face, which had remained calm enough so far, assumed a look of agonised entreaty as with an effort painful to see he dragged himself to my feet and clung to them. "What would you have done, *Huzoor*, in my place? What would you have done?"

Then a fearful fit of coughing seized him and his lips were tinged with blood. Water lay close at hand, yet I knew that this murderer would sooner have died than accept it from my defiling hand; so I called the old man who all this time had sat like a carven image in the next archway. He came, and wiped the dews of death from his son's face without a word; and as he did so Shivdeo, looking at the faint stains on the cloth, smiled an unearthly smile and whispered, "I did not suck my lord's blood, for all that. It comes from my own heart."

I am not ashamed to say that my brain was in such a whirl that I turned to escape from a situation where I felt utterly lost. As I did so, I heard Shivdeo's voice for the last time. The old man was holding a little brass cup of water to the parched

lips; but it was arrested by the dying hand, and the dying eyes looked wistfully up into his father's.

"Did I do well, O my father?" he asked.

"You did well, my son; drink in peace."

When I reached home, the English mail was in. It brought a letter from Terence. He was in Dublin and engaged to be married; considering that he was an Irishman, no more need be said. He wrote the kindest letter, saying that the great happiness which had come into his life made him all the more grateful to me, seeing that but for my care he would have gone down to the grave without knowing how the love of a good woman can make existence seem a sacred trust. He ended by these words, "And sure, old man, if it be true that all happiness is bought, some one must have paid dear for mine!"

I could not sleep that night; the war of conflicting thoughts waged too fiercely; but it was nearly dawn before I found it impossible to withstand the memory of Shivdeo's cry: "If the Presence had thought as I did, what would he have done?"

He was dead before I reached the house, but surely if he knows anything, he must know that I, for one, cast no stone.

MIDSUMMER MAGIC.

"THEN," I said, "you decline telling me about the three Kings, when their procession wound round and round these hillocks; all the little wooden horses with golden bridles and velvet holsters out of the toy-boxes, and the camelopard, and the monkeys and the lynx, and the little doll-pages blowing toy trumpets. And still, I know it happened here, because I recognise the place from the pictures: the hillocks all washed away into breasts like those of Diana of the Ephesians, and the rows of cypresses and spruce pines, also out of the toy-box. I know it happened in this very place, because Benozzo Gozzoli painted it all at the time; and you were already about the place, I presume?"

I knew that by her dress, but I did not like to allude to its being old-fashioned. It was the sort of thing, muslin all embroidered with little nosegays of myrtle and yellow broom, and tied into odd bunches at the elbows and waist, which they wore in the days of Botticelli's *Spring*; and on her head she had a garland of eglantine and palm-shaped hellebore leaves which was quite unmistakable.

The nymph Terzollina (for of course she was the tutelary divinity of the narrow valley behind the great Medicean Villa) merely shook her head and shifted one of her bare feet, on which she was seated under a cypress tree, and went on threading the yellow broom-flowers.

"At all events, you might tell me something about the Magnificent Lorenzo," I went on, impatient at her obstinacy. "You know quite well that he used to come and court you here, and make verses most likely."

The exasperating goddess raised her thin brown face, with the sharp squirrel's teeth and the glittering

goat's eyes. Very pretty I thought her, though undoubtedly a little *passée*, like all the symbolical ladies of her set. She plucked at a clump of dry peppermint, perfuming the hot air as she crushed it, and then looked up, with a sly, shy little peasant-girl's look, which was absurd in a lady so mature and so elaborately adorned. Then, in a crooning voice, she began to recite some stanzas in *ottava rima*, as follows.

"The house where the good old Knight Gualando hid away the little Princess, was itself hidden in this hidden valley. It was small and quite white, with great iron bars to the windows. In front was a long piece of greensward, starred with white clover, and behind and in front, to where the pines and cypresses began, ran strips of corn-field. It was remote from all the pomps of life; and when the cuckoo had become silent and the nightingales had cracked their voices, the only sound was the coo of the wood-pigeons, the babble of the stream, and the twitter of the young larks.

"The old Knight Gualando had hidden his bright armour in an oaken chest; and went to the distant town every day dressed in the blue smock of a peasant, and driving a donkey before him. Thence he returned with delicates for the little Princess and with news of the wicked usurper; nor did any one suspect who he was, or dream of his hiding-place.

"During his absence the little Princess, whose name was Fiordispina, used to string buds through the hot hours when the sun smote through the trees, and the green corn ridges began to take a faint gilding in their silveriness, as the Princess remembered it in a picture in the Castle chapel, where the sun was represented by a big

embossed ball of gold, projecting from the picture, which she was allowed to stroke on holidays.

"In the evening, when the sky turned pearl white, and a breeze rustled through the pines and cypresses which made a little black fringe on the hill top and a little patch of velvet pile on the slopes, the little Princess would come forth, and ramble about in her peasant's frock, her fair face stained browner by the sun than by any walnut juice. She would climb the hill, and sniff the scent of the sun-warmed resin, and the sweetness of the yellow broom. It spread all over the hills, and the King, her father, had not possessed so many ells of cloth of gold.

"But one evening she wandered further than usual, and saw on a bank, at the edge of a cornfield, five big white lilies blowing. She went back home and fetched the golden scissors from her work-bag, and cut off one of the lilies. On the next day she came again and cut another until she had cut them all.

"But it happened that an old witch was staying in that neighbourhood, gathering herbs among the hills. She had taken note of the five lilies, because she disliked them on account of their being white; and she remarked that one of them had been cut off; then another, then another. She hated people who like lilies. When she found the fifth lily gone, she wondered greatly, and climbed on the ridge, and looked at their stalks where they were cut. She was a wise woman, who knew many things. So she laid her finger upon the cut stalk, and said, 'This has not been cut with iron shears'; and she laid her lip against the cut stalk, and felt that it had been cut with golden shears, for gold cuts like nothing else.

"'Oho!', said the old witch—'where there are golden scissors, there must be golden work-bags; and where there are golden work-bags, there must be little Princesses.'

"Well, and then?" I asked.

"Oh then, nothing at all," answered the Nymph Terzollina beloved by the Magnificent Lorenzo, who had seen the procession of the Three Kings. "Good evening to you."

And where her white muslin dress, embroidered with nosegays of broom and myrtle, had been spread on the dry grass and crushed mint, there was only, beneath the toy cypresses, a bush of white-starred myrtle and a tuft of belated yellow broom.

One must have leisure to converse with goddesses; and certainly, during a summer in Tuscany, when folk are scattered in their country houses, and are disinclined to move out of hammock or off shaded bench, there are not many other persons to talk with.

On the other hand, during those weeks of cloudless summer, natural objects vie with each other in giving one amateur representations. Things look their most unexpected, masquerade as other things, get queer unintelligible allegoric meanings, leaving you to guess what it all means, a constant dumb crambo of trees, flowers, animals, houses, and moonlight. The moon, particularly, is continually *en scène*, as if to take the place of the fireflies, who perform their complicated quadrilles only so long as the corn is in the ear; gradually getting extinguished and trailing about, humble helpless moths with a pale phosphorescence of tail in the grass and in the curtains. The moon takes their place; the moon which, in an Italian summer, seems to be full for three weeks out of the four.

One evening the performance was given by the moon and the corn-sheaves, assisted by minor actors such as crickets, downy owls, and vine-garlands. The oats, which had been of such exquisite delicacy of green, had just been reaped in the field beyond our garden and were now stacked up. Suspecting one of the usual performances, I went after dinner to the upper garden-gate, and looked through the bars. There it was, the familiar, elemental witchery. The

moon was nearly full, blurring the stars, steeping the sky and earth in pale blue mist, which seemed somehow to be the visible falling dew. It left a certain greenness to the broad grass path, a vague yellow to the unsickled wheat; and threw upon the sheaves of oats the shadows of trees and vine-garlands. Those sheaves, or stooks,—who can describe their metamorphose? Palest yellow on the pale stubbly ground, they were frosted by the moonbeams in their crisp fringe of ears, and in the shining straws projecting here and there. Straws, ears,—you would never have guessed that they were made of anything so mundane. They sat there, propped against the trees, between the pools of light and the shadows, while the crickets trilled their cool, shrill song, sitting solemnly with an air of expectation, calling to me, frightening me. And one in particular, with a great additional bunch on his head cut by a shadow, was oddly unaccountable and terrible. After a minute I had to slink away back into the garden, like an intruder.

There are performances also in broad daylight, and here human beings are admitted as supernumeraries. Such was a certain cattle-fair, up the valley of the Mugnone.

The beasts were being sold on a piece of rough, freshly reaped ground, lying between the high road and the river bed, empty of waters, but full among its shingle of myrrh-scented yellow herbage. The oxen were mostly of the white Tuscan breeds (those of Romagna, smaller but more spirited, are of a delicate grey) only their thighs slightly browned; the scarlet cloth neck-fringes set off, like a garland of geranium, against the perfect milkiness of backs and necks. They looked indeed, these gigantic creatures, as if moulded out of whipped cream or cream cheese; suggesting no strength, and even no resistance to the touch, with their smooth surface here and there puckered into minute wrinkles, exactly like the

little *stracchini* cheeses. This impalpable whiteness of the beasts suited their perfect tameness, passiveness, letting themselves be led about with great noiseless strides over the stubbly ridges and up the steep banks; and hustled together, flank against flank, horns interlaced with horns, without even a sound or movement of astonishment or disobedience. Never a low or a moo; never a glance round of their big, long-lashed, blue-brown eyes. Their big jaws move like millstones, their long tufted tails switch monotonously like pendulums.

Around them circle peasants, measuring them with the eye, prodding them with the finger, pulling them by the horns. And every now and then one of the red-faced men, butchers mainly, who act as go-betweens, dramatically throws his arms round the neck of some recalcitrant dealer or buyer, leads him aside, whispering with a gesture like Judas's kiss; or he claps together the red hands and arms of contracting parties, silencing their objections, forcing them to do business. The contrast is curious between these hot, excited, yelling, jostling human beings, above whose screaming *Dio Canes!* and *Dio Ladros!* the cry of the ice-water seller recurs monotonously, and the silent, impassive bullocks, white, unreal, inaudible; so still and huge, indeed, that, seen from above, they look like an encampment, their white flanks like so much spread canvas in the sunshine. And from a little distance, against the hillside beyond the river, the already bought yokes of bullocks look, tethered in a grove of cypresses, like some odd medieval allegory,—an allegory, as usual, nobody knows of what.

Another performance was that of the woods of Lecceto, and the hermitage of the same name. You will find them on the map of the district of Siena; but I doubt very much whether you will find them on the surface of the real globe, for I suspect them to be a piece of Mid-

summer Magic and nothing more. They had been for years to me among the number (we all have such) of things familiar but inaccessible; or rather things whose inaccessibility, due to no conceivable cause, is an essential quality of their existence. Every now and then from one of the hills you would get a glimpse of the square red tower, massive and battlemented, rising among the grey of its ilexes, beckoning one across a ridge or two and a valley; then disappearing again, engulfed in the oak woods, green in summer, copper-coloured in winter; to reappear, but on the side you least expected it, plumes of ilexes, battlements of tower, as you twisted along the high-lying vineyards and the clusters of umbrella pines fringing the hill tops; and then, another minute, and they were gone.

We determined to attain to them, to be mocked no longer by Lecceto; and went forth on one endless July afternoon. After much twisting from hillside to hillside and valley to valley, we at last got into a country which was strange enough to secrete even Lecceto. In a narrow valley we were met by a scent, warm, delicious, familiar, but which seemed to lead us (as perfumes we cannot identify will usually do) to ideas very hazy, but clear enough to be utterly inappropriate; English cottage-gardens, linen-presses of old houses, old-fashioned sitting-rooms full of jars of *potpourri*. And then, behold, in front of us a hill covered every inch of it with flowering lavender, growing as heather does on the hills outside fairyland. And behind this lilac, sun-baked, scented hill, opened the woods of ilexes. The trees were mostly young and with their summer upper-garment of green, fresh leaves over the crackling old ones; trees packed close like a hedge, their every gap filled with other verdure, arbutus and hornbeam, fern and heather; the close-set greenery crammed, as it were, with freshness and solitude. These must be the woods of Lecceto, and in their depths the red battlemented

tower of the Hermitage. For I had forgotten to say that for a thousand years that tower had been the abode of a succession of holy personages, so holy and so like each other as to have almost grown into one, an immortal Hermit whom Popes and Emperors would come to consult and be blessed by. Deeper and deeper therefore we made our way into the green coolness and dampness, the ineffable deliciousness of young leaf and uncurling fern; till it seemed as if the plantation were getting impenetrable, and we began to think that, as usual, Lecceto had mocked us, and would probably appear, if we retraced our steps, in the diametrically opposite direction. When suddenly, over the tree-tops, rose the square battlemented tower of red brick. Then, at a turn of the rough narrow lane there was the whole place, the tower, a church and steeple, and some half-fortified buildings, in a wide clearing planted with olive trees. We tied our pony to an ilex and went to explore the Hermitage. But the building was enclosed round by water and hedges, and the only entrance was by a stout gate armed with a knocker, behind which was apparently an outer yard and a high wall pierced only by a twisted iron balcony. So we knocked.

But that knocker was made only for Popes and Emperors walking about with their tiaras and crowns and sceptres, like the genuine Popes and Emperors of Italian folk-tales and of Pinturicchio's frescoes, for no knocking of ours, accompanied by loud yells, could elicit an answer. It seemed simple enough to get in some other way; there must be peasants about at work, even supposing the holy hermit to have ceased to exist. But climbing wall and hurdles and squeezing between the close tight ilexes, brought us only to more walls, above which, as above the oak woods from a distance, rose the inaccessible battlemented tower. And a small shepherdess, in a flapping Leghorn hat, herding black and white baby pigs in a neighbouring stubble-field under the olives, was no

more able than we to break the spell of the Hermitage. And all round, for miles apparently, undulated the dense grey plumage of the ilex woods. The low sun was turning the stubble orange, where the pigs were feeding; and the distant hills of the Maremma were growing very blue behind the olive trees. So, lest night should overtake us, we turned our pony's head towards the city, and traversed the oak woods and skirted the lavender hill, rather disbelieving in the reality of the place we had just been at, save when we saw its tower mock us, emerging again; an inaccessible, improbable place. The air was scented by the warm lavender of the hillsides, and by the pines forming a Japanese pattern, black upon the golden lacquer of the sky. Soon the moon rose, big and yellow, lighting very gradually the road in whose gloom you could scarcely see the yokes of white cattle returning from work. By the time we reached the city hill everything was steeped in a pale yellowish light, with queer yellowish shadows: and the tall tanneries glared out with their buttressed balconied top, exaggerated and alarming. Scrambling up the moonlit steep of Frath Branda, and passing under a black arch, we found ourselves in the heart of the gaslit and crowded city, much as if we had been shot out of a cannon into another planet, and feeling that the Hermitage of Lecceto was absolutely apocryphal.

The reason of this midsummer magic, —whose existence no legitimate descendant of Goths and Vandals and other early lovers of Italy can possibly deny,—the reason is altogether beyond my philosophy. The only word which expresses the phenomenon, is the German word, untranslatable, *Bescheerung*, an universal giving of gifts, lighting of candles, gilding of apples, manifestation of marvels, realisation of the desirable and improbable,—to wit, a Christmas Tree. And Italy, which knows no Christmas Trees, makes its *Bescheerung* in midsummer, gets rid of

its tourist vulgarities, hides away the characteristics of its trivial nineteenth century, decks itself with magnolia blossoms and water-melons, with awnings and street booths, with mandolins and guitars; spangles itself with church festivals and local pageants; and instead of wax tapers and Chinese lanterns, lights up the biggest golden sun by day, the biggest silver moon by night, all for the benefit of a few childish descendants of Goths and Vandals.

Nonsense apart, I am inclined to think that the specific charm of Italy exists only during the hot months; the charm which gives one a little stab now and then and makes one say,—“This is Italy.”

I felt that little stab, to which my heart had long become unused, at the beginning of this very summer in Tuscany, to which belong the above instances of Italian Midsummer Magic. I was spending the day at a small but very ancient Benedictine Monastery (it was a century old when St. Peter Ignæus, according to the chronicle, went through his “celebrated Ordeal by Fire”), now turned into a farm, and hidden, battlemented walls and great gate-towers, among the cornfields near the Arno. It came to me as the revival of an impression long forgotten, that overpowering sense that “This was Italy,” recurred and recurred in those same three words, as I sat under the rose-hedge opposite the water-wheel shed garlanded with drying pea-straw; and as I rambled through the chill vaults, redolent of old wine-vats, into the sudden sunshine and broad shadows of the cloistered yards. That smell was mysteriously connected with it; the smell of wine-vats mingled, I fancy (though I could not say why), with the sweet faint smell of decaying plaster and wood-work. One night, as we were driving through Bologna to while away the hours between two trains, in the blue moon-mist and deep shadows of the black porticoed city, that same smell came to my nostrils as in a dream, and with it a whiff of by-gone years, the years when first I had had

this impression of Italian Magic. Oddly enough, Rome, where I spent much of my childhood and which was the object of my childish and tragic adoration, was always something apart, never Italy for my feelings. The Apennines of Lucca and Pistoia, with their sudden revelation of Italian fields and lanes, of flowers on wall and along roadside, of bells ringing in the summer sky, of peasants working in the fields and with the loom and distaff, meant Italy. But how much more Italy,—and hence longed for how much!—was Lucca, the town in the plain, with cathedral and palaces. Nay, any of the mountain hamlets where there was nothing modern, and where against the scarred brick masonry and blackened stonework the cypresses rose black and tapering, the trellisses crawled bright green up the hill! One never feels, once out of childhood, such joy as on the rare occasions when I was taken to such places. A certain farmhouse, with cypresses at the terrace corner and a great oleander over the wall, was also Italy before it became my home for some years. Most

of all, however, Italy was represented by certain towns; Bologna, Padua, and Vicenza, and Siena, which I saw mainly in the summer.

It is curious how one's associations change. Nowadays Italy means mainly certain familiar effects of light and cloud, certain exquisitenesses of sunset amber against ultramarine hills, of winter mists among misty olives, of folds and folds of pale blue mountains; it is a country which belongs to no time, which will always exist, superior to picturesqueness and romance. But that is but a vague, half-indifferent habit of enjoyment. And every now and then, when the Midsummer Magic is rife, there comes to me that very different, old, childish meaning of the word; as on that day among the roses of those Benedictine cloisters, the cool shadow of the fig-trees in the yards, with the whiff of that queer smell, heavy with romance, of wine-saturated oak and crumbling plaster; and then I know with a little stab of joy, that "This is Italy."

VERNON LEE.

EDUCATION FOR THE COLONIES.

IN spite of all that the educationists have to say against early specialisation, this is the day of specialised education. The bifurcation of the school curriculum applies to nearly every boy by the time he is fifteen or sixteen; his education henceforward is either classical or scientific, "modern" or commercial. If he be contemplating Woolwich he has no time to lose; with the syllabus of the examination kept constantly before him, he attacks the most "paying" of the obligatory subjects, and skirmishes with those that are optional. If Sandhurst be his aim, there is certainly more time to spare; but nevertheless he joins the military class, and the percentage of its failures will prove to him he can hardly join too soon. Thus, by the time most young fellows are sixteen years of age they have chosen, or had chosen for them, their ideal career in life, and are preparing themselves for passing through that strait gate to all professions,—the examination.

But the ideal is not the actual. The examiner is captious, and his discomfiture is difficult. What of those who fail to satisfy his requirements? Whither go the great army of failures, the ever increasing number of the discomfited? "Some to business, some to pleasure, take;" the counting-houses of the City are full of them, well-groomed, athletic, uncommercial clerks; in the smoking-rooms of the junior clubs you find them, conspicuously arrayed, but conscious that they are (saving the indulgence of their mothers) penniless. These stages, however, are transient; and before long the wide borders of Greater Britain allure them from the old country. There is the brief excitement of the outfitting, the interlude of the voyage, and then the taking up

of their citizenship in a far country and a new. They have been partially educated for the army, or the civil service, or the law, or what not; but for this new life in the Colonies they have had no preparation.

What follows? I will recall from my actual experience three typical cases. A., representing the "first-class average," was at Eton, and thence proceeded to Oxford. To please his father he read for a degree and took it, after many days. Becoming a student of an Inn of Court, he learnt the laws affecting dog-licenses, the rule of the road, and the regulations imposed by the Thames Conservancy. He also acquired a fund of really excellent legal anecdote. But all this was mere temporising; the day which saw him an emigrant, in one sense a first-class emigrant, could not long be deferred. The scene is changed. He became a Manitoba farmer, knowing nothing of agriculture. In the novelty of the life lay its attraction; he had forgotten that when the novelty wore off it would become monotonous. This soon happened, and then he took to sport. The farm, in time, was sold, and his debts were paid by a cheque from home. Again is the scene changed. When I met him he was keeping a whisky-store in a mushroom city. It paid him in a sense, but in another sense he was ruined. There is nothing so insidious nor so invincible as drink. I last saw him besotted, almost unrecognisable, a confirmed tramp, keeping himself from starvation by an occasional job at splitting rails or the like. And this, I repeat, is a sketch from life.

I met B. driving a waggon across a gulch. Brawny he was of muscle, long of limb, evidently a hard worker. He quoted a line from the Georgics,

and explained, by way of apology, that he had been "in the Sixth." He had spent his small patrimony in a heroic attempt to farm six hundred and forty acres, on the strength, presumably, of his acquaintance with the Georgics. But though adversity had soured him, it had not beaten him; he had become a first-rate "hand," and his work was well paid. Nevertheless he had no future. He was a farm-labourer.

I take C. from Florida, the possessor of a small orange grove and some thirty acres of uncleared land. He was in all respects typical of several hundred young Englishmen in exactly the same circumstances. This is his history: superannuated at sixteen, he was articulated, after an interval, to a solicitor. The work became so distasteful that in three years' time he exchanged it for the duties and attenuated income of an usher; two terms sufficed to bring him to the office of the White Star Line, where he bought a through ticket for Florida. In Florida, when I met him, he was more or less patiently awaiting the maturing of his orange grove, and meanwhile seeing, and yet not seeing, his property going to pieces. For lack of the skill to wield hammer and chisel, saw and plane, the fences round his place were tumbling down, and through the roof of his house the rain found its way; the waggon stood useless in its shed for the want of an hour's work on spoke and tire. On every hand were signs of like decay. The trees were pruned too late and the seedlings set out too early; when they were budded a sharp young Yankee was called in at three dollars a day, for C., like the majority of his fellows, knew nothing of the life or the needs of a plant. Of Nature he was supremely ignorant; he was blind and deaf and a cripple amid her luxuriance. Finally the "hard pan" he had cursed for sterility was recognised by a neighbour, with some slight knowledge of geology, as phosphate rock, and the place changed hands at a low figure. When I last saw C. he was picking at this

"hard pan" for a dollar and a half a day, all for the abundant profit of the unneighbourly neighbour.

Common to these three cases is the characteristic feature that not one of the three men had had any previous training for the life they were living; not one had been educated for a colonial career. A., trained in agriculture, would have found interest and profit in farming: B., likewise trained, would not have attempted the impossible and lost his capital at the outset; and C., not having mastered even the elements of fruit-culture, lacking even "the handy man's" acquaintance with tools, and having no knowledge of Nature, no suspicion, apparently, that the earth is anything but dirt, saw another reap a harvest where he had only found a blight. Such is the history of three men whose intelligence had been cultivated, and whose literary education had been far from neglected. These lives are true and typical of a large class, and show how many failures, perfectly avoidable, are to be met with in the Colonies. Of those who have failed and come home I have said nothing; the "returned empties" are legion.

As I have described these failures as avoidable, I will show not only why but how they are avoidable. I hope to show that these men should and could have succeeded; that every young fellow who goes out to the Colonies with a fair amount of character and capital, can do so with a certainty of success if,—and herein lies the kernel—if he will only be *educated for the Colonies*.

Few people know what this means; few can realise the utter change from England to, say, the Queensland Bush. There are no servants, no water-pipes, no carpenters, butchers, or bakers; no neighbouring towns; no shops in which to buy what you may have forgotten; no one to do the work for you, except at exorbitant prices, and often not then, which in the old country half a hundred trades combine in doing. Is the leg of your

only armchair broken? You must mend it, or sit on a box. Is the door off its hinges? It must be re-hung, or propped up with a log. Do you wish for bread? Then bake it. For meat? You can have it if you will kill the beast, cut out your joint and cook it. Are your trousers wearing at the knees, your sleeves at the elbows? Patch them. Is the blanket that keeps off chills and fever in the early morning wearing thin or rent? Darn it. Is the harness broken? Repair it. Is the back-board of the cart gone? Take your saw and plane and make a new one. Is the horse ill? Make him up a bolus. And so the list might run on interminably. If you want a thing done you must do it yourself; that is the golden rule of colonial life.

Here and there in a colonial experience one meets with a man who can make or mend his furniture, his clothes, or his harness; who can bake bread which is not lead, and can cook a bird or a beast to a turn; who knows when a horse is sick or sorry, and can treat it in accordance; who understands the principles of farming, finds interest in its practice, and has sympathy with Nature; who is aware that as soon as the sun arises he must rise too, for each day, according as he uses it, is his friend or his enemy. And when you meet this man, you will not want me to tell you he is successful; but I can tell you that it will be a long day's march before you find him in a young Englishman.

The great necessity for the lad who is contemplating emigration, and emigration ought to be contemplated quite as seriously as the professions, is that he should anticipate in some measure the life he will lead in the colony. That is to say, it is of all things the most important that he should have lived on a farm, working day after day at some one or other of the many occupations of farm-life. It is not sufficient that he should work and live merely as the farmer does;

he has other work before him in the future, and wider interests. The farmer sends his horses to the village smithy; the colonist in embryo must learn to shoe the horses himself. The farmer gets his cart repaired at the wheelwright's; the colonial cadet must himself be something of a wheelwright. But still it is the daily life on the farm which will stand him most in stead. He will acquire the habits of the agriculturist; to rise early, to apportion the work not only to the seasons but to the days; to watch Nature with observant eyes and to reflect; to realise by experience that cultivation is as important as sowing, that he will certainly never reap a harvest, sow as he will, unless he tend the growing plant from its earliest stages with assiduous care and intelligence. Day after day to go forth, knowing that there is work to be done, that must be done, and that to-morrow may be too late,—this is an invaluable school. This open-air, healthy life, while it invigorates the physical being, tends to impress on the character a distinctive mould. It makes the young man regular in habit, simple in life, methodical in manner; it teaches him in the school of experience the meaning of that ancient saw, *Festina lente*. It inures him to a daily labour with faith in the future; he learns that the processes are many, and the progress slow, by which Nature goes forward to her perfect work.

This, then, is the influence on his character, a most important factor. More men have failed and perished through the exposure of their unformed, unannealed characters to the peculiar stress of colonial life than through any amount of technical ignorance. It is too well known that your "young gentleman" is often the foulest-mouthed and wildest drinker of all the loafers in the saloons; the restraints of convention once removed, the pendulum swings back with dislocating force. And it is no easy thing to toil regularly without an apprenticeship to it; the necessity of rising early comes hard to him who

has never got up early save by accident or compulsion. "Dogged does it"; persistence and perseverance stand justified in any colonial experience. When Sir Arthur Hodgson, one of the most eminent of colonists, migrated in his early days to Australia, he went with small means and poor prospects; but he went with the determination of making a fortune. When he built his first hut he put over the mantelpiece this legend, *A rolling stone gathers no moss*; and over his mantelpiece it remained till fortune, and more than fortune, had been won.

There is a reed on which too many young men lean when they set their faces east or west, the reed known as the "letter of introduction." Good chances have been lost and evil habits contracted while these young Englishmen have been kicking their heels about the capital, waiting to see what would come from the letter of introduction. The great experience of Sir Napier Broome, who was a squatter before he became an official, must command attention; and what does he say concerning letters of introduction? This:—"In my colonial career I have had hundreds of young fellows coming out to me with letters of introduction. What could many of them do? Nothing at all, except to simply present their letter and to ask for some small place under the Government." Of course he was unable to grant the request in the great majority of cases.

To return to the technical knowledge gained on a farm. It is invaluable. True, the practice of American and Australian farming is not as ours; but then the principles are the same. The growth of vegetation is ordered by well-known and universally applicable laws, and he who is cognisant of these in the one hemisphere can apply them unerringly in the other. The treatment of soils, the preservation of pastures, the rotation of crops, the processes of cultivation, the art of breeding and feeding stock, veterinary science, insect pests, times and sea-

sons,—all these are matters which, with slight adjustment, may be appreciated equally well everywhere. There are various modes of ploughing and many kinds of ploughs; but the man who can and does plough in England can and will plough in any other part of the world. So with the care of stock. Much the same physiological laws bear on breeding and feeding, wherever stock may be found. They are not easy to master and it needs experience to diagnose disease. Yet it is a matter of daily occurrence that a man starts a ranch and becomes the owner of thousands of head of stock without having the most elementary knowledge of animal hygiene, the preservation of health and the prevention of disease.

Some parents, however, actually question whether any course of preparation in England will be of practical value in the Colonies, and there are those who declare that such arts as milking, carpentry, and shoeing are comparatively unimportant and will not pay for the learning. To such objections I will not reply by argument, nor even by an appeal to common-sense; it will suffice if I quote from letters which have been sent home by young colonists, which testify to the lessons of actual experience and amply prove my point. And, by way of preface, I may again cite Sir Napier Broome:—"A young man arriving in any colony, having received an agricultural and industrial education framed for the needs of colonial life, has at once a marketable value the moment he lands, and will find no difficulty whatever. It is the first period, the first six months in a colony, which is the critical time, and any young man after such an education as I have suggested will be able to take ordinary daily occupation. He can thus shift for himself, and all the while he is gaining practical colonial experience, which is as good as a ready-made income to him."

With regard to the value of some general skill, I clip the following ex-

tract from a letter sent home by a young colonist in the North-West Territory:—"To get on well here a fellow wants to be able to turn his hand to anything that turns up: all skilled, in fact, *all* labour is scarce and very costly. To be able to mend harness, a knowledge of carpentry, smiths' work and dairy-work are especially useful. The dairying I learnt has been most useful to me. . . . If a fellow makes up his mind to rough it a bit and work hard, he can't help doing well; but *one can't know too much* out here."

As to milking, this is what a lad writes home from Queensland:—"The milking I learnt is very useful. I have the name of being a good milker. It is reckoned that only about one per cent. of 'New Chums' who come out here are able to milk." Another, who had learnt to plough in England, says: "I am the boss ploughman of my neighbourhood."

In support of carpentry and its value, I could give many extracts, but the two which follow may suffice: "The first thing I had to do when I got out here was to build a house. The plans and notes which I made at home I found very useful. They were in constant request." The second is from a letter in which the writer describes the demolition by a flood of the bridge which linked him to his market. Loss stared him in the face, but he had learnt carpentry, and he made up his mind to build a new bridge. "It took the three of us about a week to put it up, sticking to it all the time. We had to cut five stringers fifteen feet long and one foot square, then nail the boards on, and fill up with earth. It looks grand now and has to carry a good deal of traffic."

As to the importance of an ability to shoe, I will quote Sir Edward Braddon, the Agent-General for Tasmania:—"Those who have been in the Colonies," he says, "will understand the value of such work as this. Speaking from my own experience, whenever a horse of mine cast a shoe,

it meant that the man would lose a whole day in getting it put on, though I was only two and a half miles away from the nearest forge. There are some who are ten or fifteen miles away, [and some fifty] and to these people the loss of a shoe means the loss of a good deal of time, which will never occur to any one who has learnt something of farriery, and who, whenever the occasion requires, can put a shoe on."

And here is testimony of a more general character:—"Any one coming out would do well to know something of veterinary work and dairying; also the blacksmiths' and carpenters' shops will be of great use to him." That is from a young South African colonist. The next comes from New South Wales:—"At present I am engaged in putting down a shaft. . . . I have found my home experience in blacksmiths' work and carpentry work very useful to me, as, for instance, in sharpening and mending mining tools and timbering, &c." Here is another:—"We have to do everything ourselves. . . . A veterinary surgeon would do well here, as hardly any one knows anything of veterinary work." A young fellow who had had a little practical instruction in geology became interested in that of his farm; the result was that he sent two or three lumps of rock to an analyst, and has now a thriving phosphate field of his own. Another, with much the same education in the industrial application of the principles of geology, lately discovered a gold reef in New South Wales. He writes home with the liveliest sense of the value of such an education.

I hope these brief echoes of experience may bring conviction to the doubters. To the general public they will show that these young fellows, having realised the actual state of things in the Colonies, are right in urging the value of some preparation for a colonial career. And so I repeat, —before emigration, education.

This education should be mainly

agricultural and industrial ; the time devoted to books should not exceed an hour and a half a day. We cannot serve two masters, and the physical work of the colonial cadet will not allow much purely mental application. Moreover, this technical education would not begin until the time when a boy would usually leave school, say seventeen. If in the course of his ordinary school education he has gained some culture, has learnt, let me suppose, to admire his Homer or his Horace, his Shakespeare or his Goethe ; if he appreciates the history of his nation, and is sufficient master of mathematics to work out some simple problems connected with the laws of leverage and energy, and if, above all, he has acquired the habit of industry which shows that "Dogged does it," and has left school with an interest in knowledge, then he has had an education which is sound, which is fundamental in the sense that he can proceed from it to almost anything. But he has had no technical education ; he has not specialised for his work in life. That must now follow.

In the daily hour and a half that I would allot to book-work, the leading principles and applications of industrial geology and botany, of agriculture, forestry, building construction and veterinary practice could well be summarised and mastered during a two years' course. This, with the miscellaneous reading which any one interested in a subject can always find time for, would be sufficient for all practical purposes. But the main work would lie in the fields and in the shops. The practice of agriculture, the care and breeding of livestock and dairy-work, are so very important that the value of a knowledge of them can hardly be exaggerated. Then would come smiths', carpenters', joiners',—I have known men in the Colonies who made their own furniture and made it well—wheelwrights' and harness-makers' work. The object of all this is not to turn out finished workmen, that is obviously impos-

sible, but so to train young fellows in the elementary practice of these arts that they can shoe their horses, forge tires and bolts, make and mend gates and fences, and keep their houses, barns and waggons in repair ; and, if not to make their harness, at least to be able to mend it. In short, they should be fit to meet and deal with any one of those emergencies which so commonly arise in colonial life.

Can all this be acquired in a couple of years ? I reply that it has been done over and over again. I have seen young fellows on the eve of emigration who could do all that I have just stated as necessary, and who, two years before, were not only unable to do any one of these things, but had not even the most elementary acquaintance with the uses and nature of materials.

The purely agricultural part of the training would naturally be introductory. "It takes seven years to make a farmer," and there are some who say that a farmer is born and not made. But in the space of two years, while living on a farm large enough to exhibit the main aspects of farm-work, a knowledge of the processes of plant-growth and cultivation can be acquired, and a practical acquaintance with them can be gained which will be useful all the world over. The cadet will, under the systematic guidance I have in view, be led to inquire into the reason of things and the natural laws which influence and limit the direction of man's industry. For example, there are few things more important to the colonist than the ability to distinguish between fertile and barren soil. Few things, too, require a more judicious mixture of experience and knowledge. Perhaps the most certain test is the prevailing kind of vegetation which grows wild on the land. There are certain well-ascertained grasses and plants which are known to be unproductive, and they testify that the land on which they grow, even though it be luxuriantly, is unproductive too. How often has an inexperienced colonist bought

land which would take all his capital and never pay him any interest! Again, our old friend Varro tells us that when trees are stunted, gnarled and moss-grown, the soil which supports them is poor; when the stems are lofty and straight and the bark smooth, the soil is rich. Of course there are exceptions to this ancient rule, but a comparatively short experience will demonstrate them; this experience, I maintain, may be acquired by a lad who has learnt to use his eyes and brains, to observe and reflect, during two years of properly ordered farm-life.

Again, in keeping stock, in breeding and rearing horses, cattle, and sheep, there is hardly anything more important for the farmer, nothing more important for the rancher, than the ability to detect, after a cursory examination, whether it will be possible to produce muscle in this or that horse and meat and fat in this or that bullock. He must first ascertain this, and then he must know how to produce the muscle or the meat. A grazier, by rule of thumb, will tell you whether a "beast" will fatten or not; and, by the same rule, will select those foods which will help to that end. But if that grazier found himself in a new country, it is highly improbable that he would choose the right food, for he has no acquaintance with the chemical nature of food or of its influence on the functional powers of the animal. It is precisely here and under such a test that some knowledge of scientific breeding, breeding based on physiology and the chemistry of plant-food, makes all the difference; and such knowledge is easily gained in the two years' course I have suggested.

In this connection, also, one meets with veterinary science. It has been often said that the experience of a farm, even if large and well-stocked, will not afford practical illustration of the theory of veterinary science. My reply is that I know of a well stocked and well-managed farm where the following diseases, among others, were

dealt with in the space of a few months:—congestion of the lungs, nasal catarrh, colic, inflammation of the uterus, milk-fever, garget (inflammation of the udder), ophthalmia, grease, formation of splints and side-bones, thrush, laminitis, cracked heels, corns, strangles, &c., together with various "injuries." Merely to witness the diagnosing and treatment of these diseases would be a training of the highest value to the young fellow who is going to keep stock in a wild country. And an acquaintance with the chief parasites and their evil work would have saved many a fortune in the past, would save many a one still. Supposing the sheep farmer knew how to detect and deal with *Strongylus Filaria*, how many a lambing season would pass by without wholesale loss; how many a sturdy young flock would be saved which last year, this year, has been lost!

Again, in practical and agricultural geology, next perhaps in importance to the knowledge of soils is that which relates to wells; where to look for water, how to look for it. Many a flock of sheep in Australia has perished of drought when water, abundant water, lay only a few feet below them. Ignorance of the permeability and impermeability of strata,—and the relation of the one to the other constitutes Nature's waterpipes—has led to catastrophe over and over again. The same ignorance has also involved a ridiculous expenditure in sinking wells. Men have been known to bore down hundreds of feet for water and at last found it—as brine! This is a good example of the close connection of the quality of water with the character of the strata through which it passes. But even some practical knowledge of well-sinking, of the limits of surface-contamination, of the methods of digging and boring and steining, is very important. Even the knowledge of the Abyssinian tube has been worth some hundreds of pounds to many a sheep-farmer.

And so I might run through the

whole course of a practical preparation for the Colonies, were it not likely to become tedious and defeat the object I have in view. There are, however, two subjects, rather beyond the ordinary range of an agricultural education, that, in my opinion, are essential to the safety and healthfulness of a colonial life. The first is a good knowledge of "first aid" principles and ambulance work; and the second is a working acquaintance with plain cookery. Few colonists are within a day's ride of a medical man, yet how often is a collar-bone, a leg or an arm broken; how still more frequently does one meet with the sprains and wounds which require careful bandaging and dressing if they are not to become dangerous. Many a limb has been rendered useless to its owner, indeed many a life has been lost through ignorance of what is understood by "first aid" of ambulance work. "It seems to me," says Lord Knutsford, "that that might possibly be, next to shoeing horses, the most useful thing the young colonist could learn."

When it is remembered that this young colonist lives either by himself or with two or three others of like kidney, that they not only make their own beds and sweep their own floors, but also cook their own food, it becomes obvious that in order to live in a wholesome manner they must be able to cook that food in a wholesome way. And this art is not so easily picked up by untutored experience, for the very simple reason that after several ghastly attempts to produce a palatable dish, the cook of the Bush falls back upon tinned meats and preserved salmon. I have met with men who never cooked a vegetable for months at a stretch and habitually ate their tinned meat cold. The only heated food, if food it can be called, that passed their lips was tea, coffee, and toddy. I remember once offering to assist an ambitious colonist-cook in the making of a breakfast-dish, but as I was a guest he would not hear of it. Believe me, that breakfast

took two hours to prepare! Upon several occasions I have eaten of the bread of the gentleman-baker; its specific gravity is ponderous. I have attacked steak-pies when I might just as well have tilted at windmills; the crust would have made stirrup-leathers and the meat macadamised the track. And then the monotony of the bill of fare; no stews, no hashes, no puddings, no tarts; nothing but plain roast or boiled which, according to my experience, means being burnt to a cinder or done to a rag! Now a few lessons in plain cookery would help a youth, cast adrift in the bush and for the first time in his life without the resources of a household at his back, to cook his meat palatably, to make a soup, a stew, and a hash by the old and simple mode of "resurrecting"; to stew fruit and make preserves; and even to turn out moderately light plain pastry, in other words, to eat wholesomely and with a palate. I repeat that such instruction should form an integral part of any education for the Colonies.

How curious it is that the parent who pays a hundred or so a year for the instruction of his son in subjects he will hasten to forget when he embarks on his new life, who will equip him even richly in the matter of outfit, of riding-boots and revolvers, never seems to realise that the boy is going to a country where his comfort, his health, even his life depend on his own knowledge of some common things. Surely the parent who removes his boy from the school where he has paid £100 a year for him to have the inestimable advantage of beginning Greek, and who, without providing any special preparation, sends him straightway out to a colonial life, must be a very conspicuous instance of the man who not only, like the knave, fails to do his duty, but, like the fool, knows not where duty lies. Yet the parent is not only to blame. There are the professional educators to whom he might reasonably look for help. They

are dumb dogs ; not a word of warning from them, not a single suggestion. They at least ought to know that a special training is as essential to the colonist as to the doctor, the lawyer, the priest. But no,—they are dumb dogs all. And to-day you may go into the saloons of Canada, and into the great cities of Australia, and find in the drunken ruin of a man the excellent fellow whom you knew so well at school ; and when you learn the history of his failure, you will agree with me that he is the product of his education, begotten by his father and his schoolmaster. Many an able, high-spirited lad has gone forth to the western world, or sailed down the southern seas to the island-continent at our feet, as unfitted to face the new life, to accept the new conditions,

as a child which has strayed from the mother's knee. And this is why I cannot put it too strongly that that nurture which is not controlled by common-sense can be, and is, more cruel than neglect ; that the experience of many a young colonist is the discovery, when he is crying aloud for bread, that his parents and his schoolmasters have put into his hand a stone. In the struggle for existence in the Colonies many a man is dragged down and trampled on ; and in numberless cases that which drags him down is his own want of any training for the struggle. Battling bravely but vainly with the rough waves of life, he sinks, simply and solely because he has not been taught to swim.

ARTHUR MONTEFIORE.

THE REAL HISTORIAN.

THERE was a time when the Muse of History moved in the halls of monarchs with regal pomp and splendour, with retinue of cardinals and princes, with blare of heralds' trumpets and clank of knightly steel; when she watched the champions break their lances in the lists, or the pilgrim wending home his painful way, or the fair damsels plying their needles in turret of medieval castle, or the gay lady riding to the chase with falcon on her wrist, or the fat monk gloating over the refectory table. There was an earlier time when she wrote on waxen tablet the repulse of the Eastern by the waking Western world, when she applauded the tragedies of Æschylus or the harangues of Pericles, when she explored the mysteries of the land of old Nile, when she traced with potent finger the achievements of mighty kings upon the surface of the living rock. And there was a later time when amid roar of cannon and thunder of rushing hoofs, amid cheer of victory and cry of despair, amid all the horror and glory of war, the Muse, with high and lofty look, beheld the death-grapple of mighty nations, traced the devastating career of superb ambition, and placed the laurel on the victor's brow, or sat with diplomatists in council and signed success away. But now she has laid aside her royal robes; she has dismissed her splendid train; she has become clear, cold, prosaic, and precise; she does nothing now but sit before a table strewn with Acts of Parliament to study the British Constitution. Warriors and adventurers, kings and courtiers, poets and philosophers were erst her companions. Now she cares for no one who is not a lawyer or a member of Parliament. She is wasted to a skeleton. She has grown bleary-eyed, and has lost her

beauty. What is worse, she has grown short-sighted too, and no longer sees or marks much that she was wont to see and mark in the days of her prime.

Now the history of the British Constitution is good. To trace the successive steps by which the sovereignty has passed from the king to the nobles, from the nobles to the people, from the people to the mob is interesting, valuable, and instructive. To investigate the mode in which the vast and complex fabric of Parliamentary institutions has developed is a legitimate task for an historian. But he must not call his work the History of England. It is because the standard modern work which bears this proud title on its cover is nothing more or less than the history of the development of the Constitution, accompanied by the thinnest possible narrative of facts, that this protest is penned. We are fully sensible of the author's many merits. It is to his school of thought, not to himself, that we take exception. We believe that history is on a wrong tack; and if our views of legitimate history be correct, then is Mrs. Markham more of a genuine historian than Dr. Bright.

A First Class man in the Final History Schools will tell you that "Macaulay and Carlyle are very good in their way. One should read them, of course. But it is not history." What then is history?

History has been defined as the biography of great men. The definition is absurdly inadequate; but, like many such epigrammatic phrases, it has a germ of truth. At certain epochs in the experience of mankind it has been tolerably correct. The biography of Cæsar for the last three or four years of his life is the history for the time of the Roman Empire. The record of

the lives of Henry the Eighth and Cardinal Wolsey is the history of the reign of Henry the Eighth. The biography of Napoleon, from the time he became First Consul to his abdication, is the history of the French people. So long as history was regarded as a succession of wars, the great figure of a conqueror filled the whole stage, and there was nothing more to know. But wars are not the whole of history any more than Acts of Parliament are. What then should the History of England be? By your leave, beardless Bachelors of Arts, and newly-elected Fellows of All Souls, let Macaulay speak.

The history of England is emphatically the history of progress. It is the history of a constant movement of the public mind, of a constant change in the institutions of a great society. We see that society, at the beginning of the twelfth century, in a state more miserable than the state in which the most degraded nations of the East now are. We see it subjected to the tyranny of a handful of armed foreigners. We see a strong distinction of caste separating the victorious Norman from the vanquished Saxon. We see the great body of the population in a state of personal slavery. We see the most debasing and cruel superstition exercising boundless dominion over the most elevated and benevolent minds. We see the multitude sunk in brutal ignorance, and the studious few engaged in acquiring what did not deserve the name of knowledge. In the course of seven centuries the wretched and degraded race have become the greatest and most civilised people that ever the world saw, have spread their dominion over every quarter of the globe, have scattered the seeds of mighty empires and republics over vast continents of which no dim intimation had ever reached Ptolemy or Strabo, have created a maritime power which would annihilate in a quarter of an hour the navies of Tyre, Athens, Carthage, Venice, and Genoa together, have carried the science of healing, the means of locomotion and correspondence, every mechanical art, every manufacture, everything that promotes the convenience of life, to a perfection which our ancestors would have thought magical, have produced a literature which may boast of works not inferior to the noblest which Greece has bequeathed to us, have dis-

covered the laws which regulate the motions of the heavenly bodies, have speculated with exquisite subtlety on the operations of the human mind, have been the acknowledged leaders of the human race in the career of political improvement. The history of England is the history of this great change in the moral, intellectual and physical state of the inhabitants of our own island.

Truly, to record the "history of this great change in the moral, intellectual and physical state" of the English race were a task for the noblest brain that even England herself should ever produce, a task to be undertaken with humility and pride, humility on account of inadequacy for the work, pride to be thought worthy to attempt it. Why then do modern historians refuse to trace the moral change, the physical change, or the intellectual change, and virtually confine themselves to constitutional change? It is as though a man should walk through the midst of the loveliest scenery with looks bent only on the straight high road, and eyes that only mark the mile-stones by the way. The historic landscape is full of beauty; vista after vista opens into the picturesque past; yet these plodding intellectual pedestrians pursue their laborious way along the arid and dusty track of constitutional development, looking neither to the right hand nor to the left.

It may be doubted whether it be right, in any sense, to make so prominent a feature of constitutional change. Acts of Parliament have the smallest possible influence upon the real life of the nation. That an Act of Parliament can turn a man out of a public-house but cannot make him sober, has become a truism. *Quid leges sine moribus vanae proficiunt?* The reason is sufficiently clear. The Act of Parliament is itself an effect and not a cause. It is a conclusion, not a beginning. It initiates nothing. It defines in words and reduces to writing the formless principle that has gradually grown to maturity in the mind of the community. Constitutional change is

but the outcome of the "change in the moral, intellectual, and physical state of the inhabitants of our own island." It is simply the manifestation of that mysterious, heterogeneous, complex, irresistible force known as public opinion. The senatorial decree, it is true, is formulated and promulgated at Westminster; but it has been debated, voted, and passed long since in the heart of the whole country.

There is, of course, a narrative in these Constitutional Histories. It is a clear but vapid stream, running with an even and steady current, broken by no roguish ripples, enlivened by no brilliant sparks, toying with no flowers, chequered by no light and shade. The events recorded in brief opposite the dates in our pocket almanacs are not more free from decent adornment. *Mar. 26, D. of Cambridge b. 1819. Mar. 28, D. of Albany d. 1884. Mar. 30, Sicilian Vespers, 1282.* Why, that one passage in Carlyle's *French Revolution* about the Bastille Clock does more to bring before our minds a great historical event than anything between the title-page and the conclusion of Dr. Bright's volumes. Let us quit for a moment the closing nineteenth century, let us go back a hundred years, let us cling to the skirts of the magician and suffer ourselves to be transported straight into the very thick and turmoil of the greatest social convulsion that the modern world has known. We are in the midst of the living tide that surges round the great dark fortress; we hear the rattle of aimless musketry, the cries of vengeance, the shrieks of despair; we see the eight grim towers upraising their wicked heads above the eddying smoke; we see fire bursting from buildings in the outer courts; we hear the clank of axes, the thunder of great guns.

How the great Bastille Clock ticks (inaudible) in its Inner Court there, at its ease, hour after hour, as if nothing special for it, or the world, were passing! It tolled *One* when the firing began, and is now pointing towards *Five*, and still the

firing slakes not. Far down, in their vaults, the seven Prisoners hear muffled din as of earthquakes; their Turnkeys answer vaguely.

Wo to thee, De Launay, with thy poor hundred Invalides! Broglie is distant, and his ears heavy; Besenval hears, but can send no help. One poor troop of Hussars has crept, reconnoitring, cautiously along the Quais as far as the Pont Neuf. "We are come to join you," said the Captain; for the crowd seems shoreless. A large-headed dwarfish individual, of smoke-beared aspect, shambles forward, opening his blue lips, for there is sense in him; and croaks: "Alight then, and give up your arms!" The Hussar-Captain is too happy to be escorted to the Barriers, and dismissed on parole. Who the squat individual was? Men answer, It is M. Marat, author of the excellent pacific *Aris au Peuple!* Great truly, O thou remarkable Dogleech, is this thy day of emergence and new-birth: and yet this same day come four years—!—But let the curtains of the Future hang.

What a picture! Let us now relate the same events in the approved modern style.

The attack commenced at one o'clock, and at five it still showed no sign of abating. The seven prisoners inquired from their gaolers the cause of the disturbance, but received vague replies. De Launay had only a hundred Invalides under his command. No help could come from Broglie, who was too far distant, or from Besenval. A troop of Hussars reconnoitred along the Quais as far as the Pont Neuf; but finding themselves hopelessly outnumbered, fraternised with the mob, and having given up their arms, were escorted to the barriers and dismissed. This was done on the suggestion of Marat, a veterinary surgeon, who had written a book called *Aris au Peuple*, and who, four years subsequently, became one of the chief personages in the worst period of the Revolution.

Lest the reader should suppose I have caricatured an imaginary baldness of style, I append Dr. Bright's description of the siege of Derry, an event not usually regarded as devoid of striking and picturesque incident. Of the heroic Walker, he merely says, "The inhabitants . . . appointed Walker, a clergyman, and Major Henry

Baker, joint governors." How the men of Derry preached and prayed, with cannon on the roof of their Cathedral and gunpowder in its vaults, how wives and sisters stood behind the defenders and loaded muskets for them, how every one of those hundred and five days had its heroic achievement, and its not less heroic endurance of want and privation, how the stout old parson sallied forth from the gates and rescued his hard-pressed friends, how they fired brick-bats coated with lead through dearth of ammunition, how happened any of the thousand and one striking incidents which marked the course of "this great siege, the most memorable in the annals of the British Isles," we learn not from Dr. Bright. This is his description of the relief of the city.

The fate of Londonderry and Enniskillen was watched with absorbing interest. A fleet, with some troops under command of Kirke, was at length despatched, but Kirke refused to risk the passage of the river which led from Lough Foyle, and which was now guarded by forts and a boom, and the starving population of Londonderry had the misery of watching the ships as they lay idly in the Lough At length, in July, the fate of Londonderry seemed sealed. Nearly everything eatable had been devoured—horse-flesh, rats, salt hides, all that could possibly be converted even into the most objectionable food. It seemed impossible to feed the population in any way for two days longer. At last a peremptory order reached Kirke to relieve the city at all hazards. On the 30th of July three vessels, two transports and a frigate, sailed up the river, and after a few minutes of difficulty, broke the boom, and in the evening, at ten o'clock, were anchored at the quay. The city was saved after 105 days of siege and blockade.

Now let us see what the relief of Derry really was. I admit that Dr. Bright is comparatively limited for space. But he calls his book the *History of England*; and unless he writes real history he has no right to arrogate to his work that proud and splendid title. Call it a phase of the history of England, and there is no

more to be said. Here is Macaulay's description.

Among the merchant ships which had come to Lough Foyle under his [Kirke's] convoy was one called the *Mountjoy*. The master, Micaiah Browning, a native of Londonderry, had brought from England a large cargo of provisions. He had, it is said, repeatedly protested against the inaction of the armament. He now eagerly volunteered to take the first risk of succouring his fellow-citizens; and his offer was accepted. Andrew Douglas, master of the *Phoenix*, who had on board a great quantity of meal from Scotland, was willing to share the danger and the honour. The two merchantmen were to be escorted by the *Dartmouth* frigate of thirty-six guns, commanded by Captain John Leake, afterwards an admiral of great fame.

It was the twenty-eighth of July. The sun had just set; the evening sermon in the cathedral was over; and the heart-broken congregation had separated; when the sentinels on the tower saw the sails of three vessels coming up the Foyle. Soon there was a stir in the Irish camp. The besiegers were on the alert for miles along both shores. The ships were in extreme peril; for the river was low; and the only navigable channel ran very near to the left bank, where the head quarters of the enemy had been fixed, and where the batteries were most numerous. Leake performed his duty with a skill and spirit worthy of his noble profession, exposed his frigate to cover the merchantmen, and used his guns with great effect. At length the little squadron came to the place of peril. Then the *Mountjoy* took the lead, and went right at the boom. The huge boom cracked and gave way; but the shock was such that the *Mountjoy* rebounded, and stuck in the mud. A yell of triumph rose from the banks; the Irish rushed to their boats, and were preparing to board; but the *Dartmouth* poured on them a well-directed broadside, which threw them into disorder. Just then the *Phoenix* dashed at the breach which the *Mountjoy* had made, and was in a moment within the fence. Meantime the tide was rising fast. The *Mountjoy* began to move, and soon passed safe through the broken stakes and floating spars. But her brave master was no more. A shot from one of the batteries had struck him; and he died by the most enviable of all deaths, in sight of the city which was his birthplace, which was his home, and which had just been saved by his courage and self-devotion.

from the most frightful form of destruction. The night had closed in before the conflict at the boom began; but the flash of the guns was seen, and the noise heard, by the lean and ghastly multitude which covered the walls of the city. When the *Mountjoy* grounded, and when the shout of triumph rose from the Irish on both sides of the river, the hearts of the besieged died within them. One who endured the unutterable anguish of that moment has told us that they looked fearfully livid in each other's eyes. Even after the barricade had been passed, there was a terrible half-hour of suspense. It was ten o'clock before the ships arrived at the quay. The whole population was there to welcome them. A screen made of casks filled with earth was hastily thrown up to protect the landing-place from the batteries on the other side of the river; and then the work of unloading began. First were rolled on shore barrels containing six thousand bushels of meal. Then came great cheeses, casks of beef, fitches of bacon, kegs of butter, sacks of pease and biscuit, ankers of brandy. Not many hours before, half a pound of tallow and three quarters of a pound of salted hide had been weighed out with niggardly care to every fighting man. The rations which each now received was three pounds of flour, two pounds of beef, and a pint of pease. It is easy to imagine with what tears grace was said over the suppers of that evening. There was little sleep on either side of the wall. The bonfires shone bright along the whole circuit of the ramparts. The Irish guns continued to roar all night; and all night the bells of the rescued city made answer to the Irish guns with a peal of joyous defiance. Through the three following days the batteries of the enemy continued to play. But on the third night flames were seen arising from the camp; and, when the first of August dawned, a line of smoking ruins marked the site lately occupied by the huts of the besiegers; and the citizens saw far off the long column of pikes and standards retreating up the left bank of the Foyle towards Strabane.

And now we know something about the relief of Derry. If it is not history, what is it?

Not only does Dr. Bright neglect to avail himself of legitimate opportunities for vivid and striking relation of events; he actually goes out of his way to avoid them. What shall we

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say of a historian who relates the story of the Gordon Riots, and omits to mention that Newgate prison was stormed and burnt by the mob? Why, Fry's *Illustrated Guide to London* is better history! What shall we say of a historian who describes the battle of Trafalgar and omits Nelson's famous signal to his fleet, a message from the doomed hero not merely to his captains and their crews for that one day, but to his countrymen and their posterity for all time! Can any one calculate the extent to which that proud and noble rule of conduct, declared amid so mournful and pathetic circumstances, has worked upon the English character? Does the author of a history of England do well to leave that out? We fancy that Nelson's declaration, illustrated and enforced by his own superb example, that to do his simple duty is the glory of an Englishman, has had quite as much practical effect upon the hearts and the actions of Englishmen, in every quarter of the globe, in every circumstance of danger and adventure, as seven-eighths of the Acts of Parliament that decorate the Statute Book. Was there no room for it in the volume of 1,472 pages that records the history of England from the accession of William the Third to our own time?

The art of character drawing is wholly disdained by Dr. Bright. Of the graphic touch which charms us ever and anon in the pages of Sallust, of Tacitus, or of Thucydides, the touch that brings before us the very man as he lived and acted in his day, we are never treated to a specimen. It is not space that forbids. It did not cost Sallust many words to describe Catiline. "*Corpus patiens inedia, vigilia, algoris, supra quam cuiquam credibile est; animus audax, subdolis, varius, cujus rei libet simulator ac dissimulatur; alieni appetens, sui profusus; ardens in cupiditatibus; satis eloquentia, sapientia parum.*" He possessed a frame that could dispense with food, rest and warmth to an incredible degree. His intellect was

daring, subtle, and many-sided. Placed in any situation whatever he could pretend to be what he was not, he could conceal what he was. He coveted his neighbour's goods, yet was lavish of his own. He was hot in his passions. Eloquence he had in plenty; wisdom he had none." Why the man moves before us. Are there no subjects for such sketches to be found in English history? Has there been no one who, like Sylla, was "*Cupidus voluptatum, sed glorie cupidior*, who loved pleasure much, but who loved honour more?" Did not the reign of Anne show forth its Alcibiades? Are not the famous figures of the past worthy to be adorned with a few descriptive lines? The Constitutional Historian seems to have stolen from his darling politics the motto "Measures not men," and to have applied the aphorism to a record that is vastly more concerned with men than measures. We feel sorry for the owner of any name that is mentioned in his pages. The poor bare proper noun stands there in a most improperly nude state, without a rag of an epithet to cover its nakedness. Yet if the poet with two or three adjectives can place before our imagination the picture of a vast and varied landscape, cannot the historian spare a word or two to give reality and life to the great figures of the past?

Calm and still light on yon great plain

That sweeps with all its autumn bowers,
And crowded farms and lessening towers,
To mingle with the bounding main.

The adjective is scarcely the enemy of the noun in that third line.

When we read history, we want to be told how the people were clothed, fed, housed; how they looked and spoke; how they thought and revelled; what manner of world it was in which they worked and loved and sighed and hoped from the cradle to the grave.

If the historian, for instance, proposes to write the record of the "spacious times of great Elizabeth," it should be his delight as well as his duty

to give a faithful picture of the epoch. He should show us the maid of honour with her ruff, the rhyming courtier with his padded hose, the bold adventurer on his solitary bark in the Spanish main, the gables of the Tudor manor-house rising amid the rook-thronged elms, the game of bowls on the Hoe at Plymouth while the Armada crept up Channel, the noble in his castle, the peasant in his hut, the poet and the playwright, the dance around the Maypole. For what reason are the amusements of the people to be excluded from history? In a man's own personal history, all that he lives of his life is lived in his pleasures. Sir Joshua Reynolds observed that the real character of a man was found out by his amusements. Dr. Johnson added, "Yes, sir; no man is a hypocrite in his pleasures." The dull routine of work goes on, day after day,—he lives not; the history of one week's work is the history of the next,—he lives not; he reads his paper, and marks that the political machine is working slowly, steadily as ever,—he lives not; only he lives during his few hours' daily freedom from his toil, and above all during those blessed periods of holiday when he can call the happy days his own. Let us then have a record of his pleasures as well as of his serious employments. Historians do not seem to know how intimately the life of a nation is affected by its pleasures and how infinitesimally by its politics. Does not the development of the race-horse deserve a place in the record of English life? If Wellington's battles were won on the playing-fields of Eton, has not the healthy English love of field-sports and games some bearing upon the moral and physical changes in the state of the race? How comes it that the Pall Mall dandy braves the bitter winter in the Crimean trenches? In the football-field, the grouse-moor, the hunting-field, must be sought the explanation why the rough-and-tumble, bird-killing, fox-hunting, cricket-playing, cool,

steady-nerved English race has won its way alike among Arctic snows and tropic heat, has conquered as well in Canada as in India, as well in Russia as in Egypt, has established its vast and splendid empire in every quarter of the globe.

Let History, then, forsake her muniment-room. Let not the Palace of Westminster close her whole horizon. Let her climb to Olympian heights, from whence she may discern the whole fair landscape, the peasant at the plough, the soldier at the war, the pioneer in the primeval forest, the inventor in his laboratory, the workman at the loom; whence she may behold the ponderous locomotive distancing the wind, the electric-lit steamship ploughing through Atlantic storm, the gun that throws its missile seven miles; whence she may see the noble's palace standing in his park, the cloud of smoke that overhangs the coal-field, the forest of masts in Liverpool or

London docks; whence she may hear the whirr of machinery, the roar of furnaces, the hum of industrious production; whence she may contemplate a liberty which affords an asylum to the oppressed of every nation, a charity which feeds the starving poor in the uttermost parts of the earth, a generosity which disdains to trample on a fallen foe, a large-hearted tolerance which is slow to be provoked, a strong and fearful vengeance which never falters or fails. Let her depict the steps by which this people has become the wonder, the envy, the admiration of the world; let her exhibit the evolution of the Anglo-Saxon character, the development of its sterling qualities; let her do justice to its commercial, its social, its moral, no less than its legislative achievements; let her trace the mode in which the poor province of the Norman Conqueror has become the England that we love and venerate, the England of to-day.

A LESSON IN THRIFT.

We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen.

I

ELIZABETH TURMITS was plodding on her way from the swede-field. At every step, her feet, which Nature had intended to be pretty and delicate feet (and which would have looked so clad in kid or French leather), plumped wearily up and down, gurgling in their bulky encasements. Now and again she paused to shift her basket, which she had filled, in passing, at the parish-shop, with flour and other necessities, from the right hip to the left, or *vice versa*. Evening was closing in, and a cold sleet was sprinkling her cotton bonnet and thin shawl of ambiguous hue. Far before her a curling white mist betokened the bed of the Lugg, and the damp of the meadows through which that sluggish stream pursues its way. But the immediate foreground showed only the road, thick in sludge and seemingly endless, between its low black hedges divided in places by a five-barred gate or a stile, with, at long intervals, a solitary cottage, its ruddy window deepening the gloom beyond.

Suddenly she moved to the right, one foot in the ditch, to avoid a rapid little pony-cart which dashed unexpectedly round a corner, its flashing lamps revealing a driver in a white stock and low-crowned hat and a keen-faced layman on the lower seat at his side.

"Mrs. Turmits! Hallo!" and the rough pony was pulled up on his restless haunches. "Why, you're going the wrong way! You got my notice particularly inviting all you wives and mothers to the lecture?"

Elizabeth Turmits dropped an old-fashioned curtsy. "Yes, sir, thank you kindly. Please, sir, 'im be a going. *Me*, I sha'n't have no time, not

to clean me, an' see to the little uns an' get up to the school by 'alf past seven, an' all. I 'a been pulling swedes, sir, at the Ox Pasture."

"The Ox Pasture! My good soul, what are you thinking of? Field-work at that distance from home!"

"Please, sir, it be all our master's land. Mr. Acres, his men's wives be bound to work."

"But can you never get a day off? An important lecture like this! Quite as important, to say the least, for you women as for your husbands."

"Please, sir, be it 'ow it may, I must get Saturdays. An' there be a sight o' swedes. An' we wants to get 'em pulled afore the sharp frosts sets in. An' Mr. Acres, sir, he be that arbitrary; 'im 'ud say as soon as look at yer, 'If Tom Turmits an' his missis don't care for the place, there's plenty as 'ool.' An' then where 'ud we be, sir? an' our little uns treading one on another's 'eels, so to speak."

"Well, good evening, Mrs. Turmits. But you remember, now,—'Where there's a will, there's a way.'"

The new vicar lashed the eager pony somewhat imprudently; and away sped the little cart towards the Board Schools. Elizabeth Turmits dropped another curtsy, and meekly resumed her journey in the opposite direction.

"These people seem all but hopeless," observed the vicar. His past experiences had been acquired, first, in a model village ruled by a Lady Bountiful and a rich rector; secondly, at a cathedral town, where he had sung in the choir, taught mathematics to the lower forms of the college school, assisted plentifully at amateur concerts, with a due proportion of dinner-parties, quiet suppers, golf, and lawn-tennis, and taken occasional duty for sick or absent clergy, upon the usual

terms of a guinea per service and his cab-hire. The minor canons having in turn refused the straggling country parish where he now found himself, its patrons, the Dean and Chapter, had utilized the occasion to promote their favourite choral vicar; who had come primed with decided theories and a friendly contempt for his easy-going predecessor, now reposing at a lighter and more lucrative post, while his boots still perambulated his late haunts upon the industrious feet of Mrs. Turmits.

"It is positively impossible to stir them up on any subject whatever. That woman, now! Their excuses sound very plausible; but I make it a point not to listen to them. I give always that one answer,—I am convinced of its truth—'Where there's a will, there's a way.'"

"Quite so," assented the lecturer on Thrift; "they'll find it true when compulsion comes. Compulsion will have to come, you know; they're like animals, the future has no existence for them. I hope your guardians are firm in refusing outdoor relief; you clergy may do a good deal by setting your faces resolutely in that way. The refusal may cause some suffering temporarily; but we shall soon reap the benefit. A few corns of wheat must always drop off, you see, before one can get the harvest. However, I'll do my best to stir them to-night, and 'Im's coming at least; so we'll be hopeful."

And the pony-cart drove on with renewed ardour, regardless of the mud that splashed its sides.

II.

MEANWHILE Elizabeth Turmits by dint of patient plodding had at length reached her home; a roadside cottage, close to the gate (sorely in need of paint) which led to the farm-precincts of Mr. Acres, the largest ratepayer in the parish.

"'Im be well enough, but, you mind! you mustn't cross 'im," had

been a fellow-workman's warning, when Thomas Turmits entered the service. Thenceforth, to avoid that catastrophe had been with Thomas, and with Elizabeth likewise, a principal object in life; for frequent moves, involving loss of time, where time meant wages and wages existence, to say nothing of the wear and tear of furniture, would be to them a serious evil. Bill aged eight, Jack aged seven, Tommy aged six, Ben aged four and a half, Dick aged three and three months, Alice aged two, and the baby just beginning to toddle, were all solid arguments for the advisability of on no account crossing Mr. Acres. So Thomas bore patiently with the "tantrums" for which that autocrat was chiefly renowned, and took care to support his politics at the election, and when the parson (him of the boots) had said to him, in an *Et-tu-Brute* tone, "Why, Thomas! you for Home Rule!" he had answered apologetically with a meek touch of his thick forefinger to his forehead, "You see, sir, our master, him don't ask what we be for, or what we bain't for, so long as us votes his way." Elizabeth also bowed her head to a stern decree forbidding pigs and fowls on the workmen's premises, and endured all manner of discomforts in the cottage, which was old and often needed repairs, sooner than "worrit" the master. "It'll be time enough to pick an' choose when the babies stops coming," she said; "us must ruggle on, the best us can, till then."

The cottage, outwardly, was picturesque, crossed with beams of black timber forming squares filled in with cream-coloured plastering. The thatch had lately been mended, after a year's submission to the inroads of snow and rain, and the bright yellow of the new straw contrasted strangely with the murky hues of the rest. But contrast and hues alike were hidden by darkness as Elizabeth Turmits turned in at the wicket-gate and raised the wooden latch of the rickety door beyond which her children awaited

her. A few red embers glowed dimly, from the wide old grate, upon six small heads of varying height; also upon a wickerwork perambulator, wherein, beneath miscellaneous coverings, slumbered that tyrant the baby, and which some years ago a second-hand dealer had exchanged, as serving a double purpose, for the wooden cradle.

"Why, there now, mother's come back to you, and you be good little lads, as ever was, a sitting here so quiet! An' Alice too, her mother's pet, her be. Here, Bill! you unlace my boots; I'se that tired!"

She sank upon the hard settle, aching in every limb; aching, and empty, and cold, and looked about her. "My! what a confusion this room be in! Where's your daddy? Oh, gone to the lecture, sure. Here, Jack, you come to my boots, and, Bill, get the lamp, there's a good lad. Where's the matches? That fire ain't hot enough to kindle a dry shaving. Be the kettle full, Bill? I feels no life in me, somehow; I sha'n't be right till I gets me a cup o' tea."

"Daddy told we not to put on no coals, not till you did come home," said red-cheeked Bill.

"No, nor then; I'll keep 'em till it be time to get his supper. Billy, go to the back kitchen, an' bring us a bit o' wood, that as I gathered in the field; it'll boil the kettle. That be right, lad. Them boots, they steams like engines! an' my legs be that stiff! When I was a silly girl, I was used to laugh at the rheumatics. Don't never none o' you boys laugh! What is it, my Alice? Why, you be ready to drop, so you be! A poor little lass, forced to wait for her bad mother! You come along, my darling, I'll get you to bed; an' you, my Ben an' Dicky, lads, come your ways! Never mind my tea till I've put 'em comfortable, Bill. Come on, the lot on ye, all but Bill an' Jack."

She disappeared up the short, steep staircase, dragging her weary limbs by force of will. What though she

had been pulling turnips all day, and had walked home afterwards a mile and a half, with a heavy basket, in the sleet; if the children wanted rest, what of that? She tucked them all in; the older boys in a large bed at the head of the stair, where presently Bill and Jack would join them; the younger, with Alice, in the room, which held two beds, opening therefrom. The cottage had no other bedroom.

"You do look white, mother!" said Bill, when she returned.

"I feels white, lad. But you've got the kettle boiling, good little chap! I'll soon be better. An' now, you an' Jack, you go on up after the rest; else you won't be fit for school, an' they'll summons poor father: Mr. Kane, he be that resolute! I'll do well enough now, my lads. You sleep sound; and when I've had me a drop o' tea, I'll undress baby."

The little fellow stumbled up the wooden stair; and once more the mother, left alone, looked helplessly around her.

Elizabeth Turmits was no ideal housewife. Her mother, like herself, had spent much time in compulsory field-work; little, with equal ability, remained to instruct her girls after the method of industrious cottagers in model story-books. Elizabeth had been trained, with due threatenings of "the stick," in honesty and truth; for the rest, imitation and necessity had been her teachers. At twelve she had gone to service as maid-of-all-work in the busy, scrambling household of a small tradesman; and place after place of the same kind had employed her girlhood until the time of her marriage to Thomas Turmits.

Now, therefore, when she had spent four continuous days among the swedes, returning only for a hurried half-hour at dinner-time, and at night tired to death, the state of the one living-room may be best imagined by those who know what their own rooms, somewhat differently furnished, become if the mistress of the house

be ill or absent, the servants (and Elizabeth Turmits had no servants) inefficient, and boy-children in overwhelming majority.

The floor, ill-paved with fissures between the bricks, bore witness to the condition of the roads. The wooden chairs, the table in the window, the dresser with its shelves and drawers, were not only thick in dust, but piled with heterogeneous articles, from a broken "crock" and a string of cotton reels, with which Dick and Alice had been playing, to the baby's gnawed carrot and Thomas Turmits's corduroy waistcoat set aside for mending; not to mention a roll of Elizabeth's hurden aprons, which awaited time and the wash-tub.

"It do all want tidying fit to break anybody's heart," she thought, sighing, as she sipped her tea. "My work be cut out for Saturday! But a must make it a bit comfortabler like to-night, or he'll think he'd be better off at the public."

So she utilized the strength won from the tea (albeit stewed) to drag herself to her feet, and was moving towards the over-burdened dresser, when a sturdy cry arose. The imperious baby, who was teething, had to be taken up, cosseted, fed, and then prepared for the night; afterwards Elizabeth, having deposited it upstairs, lest her husband's return should re-awaken it, found herself literally powerless for further labours. She could only bring the corduroy waistcoat to her round table beside the smouldering fire, and occupy the hour before preparing her husband's supper in the concoction of a somewhat clumsy patch. Now and then her eyes roamed thoughtfully from her work to the boots still drying on the hearth.

"I doubt another week of it 'ull split 'em," she murmured, shaking her head. "If the old parson was here, he'd have another pair ready for me by now. But this new un, I can't bring myself to ask him. Folks says he don't hold wi' giving, thinks it do's harm, or something. I reckons it do's

worse harm to go barefoot! Suppose he was set down here, in this chair where I be, wi' ten shillings in his pocket, an' them blessed seven little uns upstairs to say nothing of 'im to find for, for a week! An' nought to fall back on, but my eightpence, this week five days, an' that week three days, maybe, in the fields, an' half o' that took out, I knows, in wear an' tear; what 'ud him feel like? He'd think twice afore he talked any more about a bit of a gift, now an' again, doing poor bodies harm! But there now, poor young man, how can he tell, as have no wife, and no chick nor child? An' taught, may be, by them that reared him, as us working folk be made of different stuff, like, to hisself! It be my belief some of 'em thinks as we could live on grass, if we'd a mind! The parsons did ought to be all married. Married men be more feeling; and they *knows*. But whatever be I to do? Bill and Jack well nigh barefoot, an' bound to go, the mile an' more, to school regular, if it was ever so! There's a most enough for Bill's pair in the cracked teapot. Me, I'll have to bide; I must make shift a while longer, if it cripples me."

III.

"THEY calls it The National Insurance Scheme. Our parson, him be took up wi' it uncommon. Him be all for we beginning at once, wi'out waiting for Government, an' putting by so much a week; young uns least, an' old uns most. It appears he've been off, to London, to Sir John, as owns a sight o' land i' these parts, though we never sees him; an' they 'a put their heads together, an' between 'em they 'a made out a plan, as we on Sir John's lands as begins at once, shall get our share, whether or no us be over the Government age. Sir John an' the parson, they'll see to it; the parson, him be treasurer. That there lecturer, him explained it all. I 'on't say as I rightly took it in, not the whole on it;

but his figures was wonderful clear Sir John, he be rich enough to buy up the kingdom; an' him have pledged his word. It'll be as safe as the clubs, for them as can put into it."

Elizabeth had prepared her husband's supper, of boiled bacon, onions, and greens, a savoury mess such as Thomas Turmits's soul loved. The kitchen looked more comfortable; the lamp was turned up to its full height; the fire had at least some warmth, wherein Elizabeth was basking seated upon a three-legged stool. In her hand was a short clay pipe, which she was clearing with the aid of a twig, preparatory to replenishing it with strong tobacco, for Thomas's refreshment by and by. She still ached from head to foot, and thought with comfortable anticipation of her bed; but she would not, even for new boots, far less new legs, have hurried Thomas, who, knife in hand, was making the most of his meal and his leisure, and talking slowly, a pause after each sentence.

"Parson wanted me to join to-night; him were taking down names. But I says, 'No, sir, thank 'ee, not to-night; I must mention it to my missis.' Him looked put about terrible, as more o' we married ones didn't join; but, as I says to Joe Williams, 'There be a deal,' I says, 'as wants considering. I must talk it over with my missis,' I says. Thirty-one year! it'll be thirty-one year till I be's sixty-five. Us might all be dead and buried afore then. I 'a found out why our parson don't hold wi' giving, however."

"And why, pray?" asked Elizabeth, poking hard at an obstinate bit of ash in the pipe.

"It be all along o' ignorance. Him says gifts makes beggars an' slaves of us; him wants us all to be independent, same as he, an' paddle our own canoes, like. Joe Williams, he were sat next me, an' he nudges me, an' says, 'All right,' he says, 'I be quite agreeable; only my canoe have got a hole in the bottom, an' none o' my tools 'll mend

it,' he says. 'God helps them as helps theirselves,' says the parson. 'You put by,' he says, 'you scrape an' scrat all you can; an' at sixty-five, when you 'a worked till you can work no longer, an' your eyes be dim, an' your frame be wore out wi' rheumatics from the clay soil,' he says, 'you'll have, it may be two shillin', it may be three shillin', for a few years more, till your old bones drops into the ground you've tilled for the gentry,' he says."

"What! did the parson use them words? 'Scrape and scrat,' an' 'wore out wi' rheumatics'?"

"I be telling you wrong, my girl; now I thinks on it, it were Joe Williams said that. Him were holding forth, after, in the road, a making fun for young fools; I hearkened a moment, an' come on, 'cause I knowed as you'd be waiting. What the parson said were about God Almighty helping them as do's the best they can for theirselves, an' doesn't hang on to others."

"An' don't us do the best us can for ourselves? Don't you an' me, any way?" returned Elizabeth plaintively. "If us didn't, it 'ud be a poor tale! Because there be lazy-bones as begs an' won't work, an' then drinks away that as they begged for, must the gentry grudge so much as an old pair o' boots to honest folks as toils their life out? The parson thinks as we be all the same. An' why do he think it? I can show you, in Bill's old copies."

She rose stiffly, and from the chaotic mass upon the dresser disinterred the soiled remnant of an exercise-book. "Can you read them words, Tom? They be nice and plain."

Thomas Turmits read, aided by his finger, in Bill's round hand, — *A Little Knowledge Is A Dangerous Thing.*

"That be it!" said Elizabeth, reseating herself. "The new parson an' a sight more o' his kind, they knows us poor folk a little, I don't deny. Some says him be even again' the Clothing Club bonus. Well! all as

is, if us must look to nought but our wages, us ought to be better paid."

"An' how be the masters to pay better? That I will say for 'em," observed Thomas; "a many has pretty hard work to find their own rent. It do seem to me, when I considers, like, as the Government might help a bit, when it be we as works the land an' all. Them rich folk, from Her Majesty down'ards, they eats a sight o' bread, first to last, you may depend, an' flour according; an' their horses eats a sight o' oats. Where 'ud 'em be, if us didn't plough an' sow an' get in the harvests for 'em?"

"Tom, you mind as you knocks out the ashes next time," said Elizabeth, neatly packing the clay bowl. "Here, I've filled him all right for you to smoke while I clears away. I wonders how you'd get on wi'out your pipe, old chap? Talk o' pensions! If us, as be doing all us can, must needs do more, again' a time us may never live to see an'll be too old to enjoy, us had best be killed straight off, as soon's we gets past work. That 'ud be just as well for we, and no odds to them."

"But how about the law, Bess? an' the ten commandments, as you an' me learned in the same class at school?"

Elizabeth laughed. "An' the sixth were one o' the little short uns as you always know'd. What a dunce you was, well I remembers it, over them long uns, Tom! Well, the next best, they should train some o' them big monkeys as Bill's prize-book told on, for field-labourers. They'd do wi' less pay; an' when they was past work, they could be turned out to fend for theirselves i' the woods, an' younger ones got i' their places. Or it wouldn't be no sin to shoot *them*, an' their old skins, maybe, 'ud cheapen shoe-leather."

Her laugh now had a ring of bitterness. Tom Turmits lighted his pipe. "The worst as is," he said, meditatively, "by what I could make out, Government have got plans to stop out-door relief, without for them as puts in to that there National Insurance. You an' me, as it might

be, Bess, if us can't join Sir John's scheme, us 'll end our days in the House, as like as not. There 'on't be no help for it, when we gets past work, if out-door relief be stopped."

"But that 'ud be wickedness, Tom," cried Elizabeth, stopping, dishes in hand, on her way to the back-kitchen. "Do you tell me as they'd visit it upon we, if us downright hadn't money to join? We, wi' seven little uns, an' others coming, for aught as us do know?"

"You should 'a heard the lecturer. Him wouldn't count that no visiting at all; nought but what we'd brought upon ourselves, through marrying."

"Well, that beats all!" said Elizabeth, aghast. "Do they want to stop folks marrying? They'll be bringing charges again' God Almighty next, as made our natures."

"It weren't marrying altogether. What he talked again' were marrying early. There'd be reason in it, if we o' these parts was like them as I 'a heard tell on i' London, children, so to speak, as marries in their teens. But you might search the register-book through, an' you'd scarce find one i' ten, hereabouts, as have married under two an' twenty. I doubts if you'd find a man at all, these score o' years, as have married under twenty-one."

"An' the others be a sight older," returned Elizabeth. "You an' me now, Tom; you was twenty-five, an' I were twenty-four, decent ages as you could desire."

"Our parson, him put in his word there," said Tom, with a puzzled aspect. "Him ups an' tells that there lecturer, 'I be thankful to see,' him says, 'as the young men about here bain't foolish, like they be in some quarters. We gets very few early marriages, on the whole, in this parish,' him says. An' the lecturer taps with his knuckles, an' hollers, 'Hear, hear.'"

"Hearken!" cried Elizabeth, startled.

A noisy rush of feet, with shrieks of laughter, a woman's laughter,

rising above gruffer peals, not too sober, had suddenly broken the stillness of the November night. Thomas Turmits went to the door, his wife following. The moon was sailing amid storm-clouds; in the road, a wild group was dimly visible; a girl struggling in rough horse-play with two or three youths, flying from them, then pausing to laugh and beckon.

"It's Ted I wants, Ted Reynolds. Ted! why won't you ever look at me?"

They rushed on, soon out of sight, though not of sound.

"There be scarce a night," observed Thomas, "as I be leaving my horses, but I meets that there Ada Martin about the roads."

"Shut the door, an' come away from the draught, Tom," cried Elizabeth. "What more did the lecturer say again' early marriages?"

IV.

OUT-DOOR relief to be stopped, excepting for such as had pensions! Elizabeth Turmits awoke, after three hours of sleep, with this idea burning in her brain. Out-door relief stopped! No escape, when infirmity should end work, from the House, save in pensions provided beforehand by the heavily-burdened workers themselves! The darkness made the prospect more terrible. She had hardly realized it before.

Her thoughts went back through long years. She remembered Tom in early youth; how steady and patient he had been; how, when they began to "keep company," his wages at the same time increasing, he had hoped to lay by in anticipation of marriage; but, his father dying and his invalid mother left with three boys too young to support her, had lived with them, and helped them instead. How, when his mother too died, he had paid for her funeral, and then some time longer continued to help his two youngest brothers; so that only a very small nest-

egg had remained, after house-furnishing, for himself and Elizabeth, which had melted, replaced by debt at Jack's birth, in Elizabeth's dangerous illness. How an exceptionally good harvest had revived hope, and Tom had joined the "Foresters," paying punctually, though with difficulty, until again illness came,—not to himself, he would have had the club allowance, but among his children, first one, then another, sickening of scarlet fever. A terrible time had that been! Elizabeth, looking back, wondered how she had lived through it. She herself was the last victim, and Tom was forced to hire a woman to see to her and to the still weakly boys; his club-payments had then lapsed hopelessly, and could never be renewed. At his present age they would be too heavy for renewal. Somehow, later, she and Tom had contrived between them to free themselves from debt, and, schooled by bitter experience, had resolved henceforth to eschew it. They did now just pay their way, but only through constant struggle. The thought of any new tax, however small, weighed like lead upon Elizabeth's heart.

Why was their life so hard, she wondered, the life of these tillers of the soil? A vague protest against injustice somewhere, she could not fix the spot, kindled her meek breast. Shopmen, clerks, colliers, artisans, these can at all times make holiday. For these indeed holidays are organised; but for the agricultural labourer there are no Bank Holidays, no short hours, no early closings. He has no Free Library to sharpen his wits: no quickening intercourse with the keener minds which co-operate in towns. The seasons would not, if he asked (and he would never dream of asking), tarry one hour for his pleasure. The sunshine must immediately be utilized; the frosts brook no delay; the dumb animals, his fellow-workers, have daily, often nightly, needs upon which he must wait punctually, never failing. The years roll by; other men come and go; but he is still at his

post ; and his post, in wet or dry, in snow or rain, in burning heat or in freezing cold, is always out of doors. He has no opening for private enterprise ; in the only business known to him, want of capital, no less than want of time, is a fatal barrier. As the winters and his patient toils multiply, his back and limbs stiffen and ache ; but still, in the vast majority of cases, he plods on, until literally he can plod no more. Life still lurks in the brawny frame which endurance and industry have hardened ; he can feel still, pain and mild pleasure, although he cannot work.

Is it not hard ? Some such question, half articulate, stirred Elizabeth, that, this long day's work by stern necessity over, he should be shovelled out of sight, or left to rot and starve, forgotten by those who have lived on him and by him, who without him could not have lived, far less have thriven and enriched themselves, while he (to use Elizabeth's term) "ruggled on" as best he could, on his weekly wage. They have used him,—all that in him served their purposes, the rest stifled and ignored—to the uttermost. Must he now for the few remaining years reap only punishment, because, in giving his life day after day, and in each day twelve hours, for them, he failed perhaps in thrift for himself ? Because he lacked for himself foresight, who never lacked foresight for them, for them and for the fields now bringing forth through his ceaseless cultivation a hundredfold ; while he, pining and homesick, decays slowly in his living grave behind the great Workhouse wall.

Ought these things to be ? But if they are, one must look them in the face. To this practical conclusion Elizabeth, in the darkness, soon came. Her nature had nothing in common with the Louise Michels of the world. She might question a little, and lament sometimes a little, querulously but always gently. This slight overflow expended, she invariably relapsed into dumbness, and submitted.

She was speedily absorbed in the pressing consideration of how to save her Tom from the fate foreshadowed by the lecturer. A picture rose before her. Tom in old age, worn by labour, tormented by rheumatics, hungry, cold, threadbare, wages ended, applying for help from the parish, for two and sixpence, or two shillings and a loaf, and refused. Refused ! Then a struggle, the furniture sold, bit by bit,—Tom would fight hard, she knew. As for herself, she forgot herself altogether ; Tom absorbed her mind ; Tom, country-bred from the first, ever accustomed to abundance of space, to fresh air, to all the free rural ways, to his rustic neighbours, to his evening pipe ; his life like a wild bird's life, labour excepted. Only lately she had seen an old man taken away, in a closed van, to what for him was prison ; shut up, subject to iron rules, after a life of honest toil, till death among strangers. It would come to that, if out-door relief were stopped ; unless——

She must save him. Somehow she must manage to "put in" to Sir John's scheme. Sixpence a week had been the lowest sum named for men over thirty ; a sum, however, which the parson, with that dangerous little knowledge of his, had said would be surely within the power of them all ! More, she knew, was simply impossible ; but this she would contrive. Only how ? The question of the boots recurred, and with it other like questions. Tom's new suit, soon necessary ; warm clothes for Dick and Alice ; coal to last till the Coal Club dole in January ; a gown for herself, she had now no "Sunday gown." And the boys' appetites were growing every day.

"I can't screw nought out o' their food, the poor little lads, wi' their school work and the long walks to an' again. No, nor Tom's ; I don't know who 'd have the heart to pinch Tom, so industrious as he be. An' a man be that hearty ! An' if him hadn't vittle, he'd take it out maybe in drink.

He'd be bound to take it out somewheres, poor chap. My gown, that must wait. The Almighty knows I'd go to church if I could. He'd never be hard upon me, when it's to save my Tom, as finds us bread by the sweat o' his brow, from the Workhouse. And Him knows as I can't go i' that dirty linsey, and it shrank so, last time, I dursn't wash it. Then I'll eat a bit less,—I'll put a loaf aside for myself and make him last me ten days; I can bear a bit o' hunger, upon 'times. If it gnaws, I'll think o' my Tom hungering, may be, for a bit o' country-made bread i' the House. An' my tea,—that 'll cut the hardest! but I'll soon get used to it; I'll have a ounce less. There 'll be twopence at once; an' the savin' i' bread, we 'll say 'll be twopence halfpenny. And I'll leave off cheese, wi'out just a mite now an' again. An' in a bit, may be, I'll find something more to leave off. An' I'll cut up my warm petticoat for Alice's frock; I can make shift in the other. I can manage, an' him never know. I'll begin to-morrow."

So next morning, to Thomas's surprise, she said: "Tom, I've been a-thinking things over, like. Us'll manage sixpence a week. You give me sixpence less out of your wages, for the food an' that; and then you can put in to the scheme."

"But you've found it hard to make two ends meet as it were, Bess. I've been thinking too; and I've half a mind to give up my 'bacca."

"Give up your 'bacca, as you've told me times an' times, 'were your main help! that comforting, an' filling up the hole, so to speak, when vittles be short! Never, Tom, while I stands on my two feet. You take out the sixpence, lad, as you gets your money; an' leave the rest to me. An', after work, you'd best go an' tell the parson."

So, greatly to the young parson's satisfaction, Thomas Turmits that same night appeared at the Vicarage, and accepted Sir John's scheme.

V

"I've made up my mind, Mrs. Turmits. I won't consent till we've £100, between us, in the Savings Bank. I shall be very decided; it's only for Ted's good."

Elizabeth Turmits looked puzzled. "I bain't altogether sure, Janey. There be different kinds o' good."

It was Sunday afternoon. Jane Wilson, a young housemaid, at home for a brief holiday, whose parents were near neighbours of Thomas and Elizabeth, had stepped in for half an hour's chat.

"But it must be good to learn habits of temperance and economy," she said sharply, as Elizabeth, rocking the sleeping baby in her arms, looked thoughtfully into the fire. "You ought to have heard the grand lecture, Mrs. Turmits, in my master's iron room. The gentleman specially warned us girls about our responsibility. He said that if only we would set our faces against these early marriages, and influence our young men to—"

"I knows," interposed Elizabeth. "Us had him here. Tom told me all as he said. But them lectures,—there be two sides to it, Janey."

"There are indeed," said Janey, who, unlike her friend, had been born late enough to profit by the Education Act, and had in her time attained the proud pinnacle of the Seventh Standard. "Look at the misery of our poor, with their large families, all owing to want of foresight—"

"Janey, stop a bit," said mild Elizabeth.

"I mean nothing against you, Mrs. Turmits. I know what your drawbacks have been. I think all the world of you as you're well aware."

"I can't tell why, I'm sure," said Elizabeth, colouring and smiling. "You a picture to look at, an' such ways, so tidy, an' have attended cookery classes! An' me always in a muddle! To be sure, you was an only child, Janey, my dear, an' your mother's house be like a new pin. But there,

if I'd been the same twice over, I'd never 'a turned out clever like you. All as is, when you talks o' want o' foresight, I've been thinking to write to you, Janey; only I be such a poor scholar, and the post miscarries too upon times. But I 'a had it on my mind, this long while, to let you know about Ted."

"Ted?" said Janey crimson.

"He be uncommon lonely, you see, Janey. Since his mother died he've had no one to look after him, so to speak; and her petted him, an' made him that comfortable he feels it all the more. Mary Bush her lodgings ain't any too clean; an' she don't trouble to put his supper nice, nor nothing. I 'a seen that much wi' my own eyes. An' her've a grumbling tongue, as young fellows likes to get shut on. There be a deal o' excuse."

"Excuse! Oh, Mrs. Turmits! you promised, long ago, always to tell me about Ted."

"Only you be so hasty, Janey, my dear. Now you try to see his side. There be a ball at the public, regular, every Monday night; an' pigeon-shootings constant, an' after the pigeon-shootings suppers. Look how them young fellows gets tempted! Now they, if you like, gets plenty to put into Sir John's scheme; only some on 'em ought to help their parents more nor they do's, an' all on 'em ought to be saving again' they're married. They thinks a deal too little o' marriage, as it be, Janey, about here; they don't want no incensing to keep from it. If you lived by this roadside at nights, an' heard them lads a rampaging! An' that Ada Martin,—poor wench! her've a bad home, an' I don't want to be hard on her. But there!"

"I know," said Janey, still crimson. "But Ted, Ted would never look at her?"

"Janey, my lass, she be after him. That be all as I can say. There he be, to himself in lodgings; an' lonesome, an' you away, an' the evenings that long, an' the balls at the public as

passes away the time, an' Ada as sticks at nothing."

"Well, Mrs. Turmits, if it comes to that, he must choose between us, Ada Martin or me."

"You be too quick, Janey. Choose between you! I never meant as he could love her. He loves you wi' all his heart, my dear, that I knows, an' Ada be one as no decent young fellow could love. But there be other things besides love, Janey."

"If Ted's one of that sort, he won't suit me; and so I shall tell him," said the girl.

"He be one o' the sort as a good home be the making on. An' there be a many like him. Talk o' saving £100 afore you gets married? Take care as you don't lose more nor you saves! A handy girl like you too, an' got your sewing-machine, as you can always turn a penny by, to help out. Why, look at my Tom, Janey; would you wish to see a steadier husband? My missis, in the last place I had, she were all for me waiting till I were thirty; it 'ud save me a sight of trouble, she said. An' I were half ready to hearken to her; but I went home, an' there were Tom, as had started his brothers to service, an' were lonesome like, same as your Ted; an' one an' another, when he were leaving his work, saying, 'Come along Tom! what'll yer 'ave?' an' a deal more, that young fellows gets led away by. So when he told me as he were that lonesome, I thinks, 'Never mind me, trouble or no trouble.' An' we was married that summer."

"And here you are, after all you've gone through, advising me to follow you?" said Janey.

"I'd do it over again," said Elizabeth, still rocking the baby. "Yes, if the time was gone back, and I fore-see'd all as have happened, I'd do it, just the same, again. An' if I could make bold I'd tell that lecturer, 'For early marriages, sir, one man's meat be another man's poison. You 'a got hold o' the wrong end o' the stick, sir.' Janey, this be how I looks at it. Men

be different fro' we. When we loves 'em, it be better to die for 'em than leave 'em alone to go wrong."

Janey sat long silent, looking down at her hands which were encased in neat kid gloves. "Mrs. Turmits," she cried suddenly, "you're half an angel. But I'm not an angel one bit. There's Ted in the road! I'll go out to him and give him a piece of my mind."

VI.

"SHE seems half-starved," said the parish doctor; "that is the secret. She has been living too low for a long time. You look well enough, my man, both you and your lads," he added after a thoughtful survey. "Was her appetite fanciful, or what?"

"I reckon it be all along o' that there Thrift," said Thomas doggedly. "Her've been stinting herself, I'll lay, to save the sixpence as we puts in to Sir John's scheme."

"It's been sixpence wise and pounds foolish, then," said the doctor. "You'll spend ten times as much as you've laid by, before, if ever, you get up her strength again. Shall I give her an order for the Workhouse Infirmary? She mustn't be moved yet, though."

"Her shall never be moved from here, not while I 'a hands to work," said Thomas Turmits. "It worn't no doings o' mine, sir; I know'd nought on it. Though I might 'a know'd," he added to himself; "aye, I might 'a know'd."

Upstairs Elizabeth lay pale and prostrate in the calm of the sweet spring evening. A thrush was singing in the lilac boughs near her window. The sunset glow was transfiguring the green of Mr. Acres's home-meadow, wherein her faint eyes rested upon two caid lambs, sporting merrily although their mother had died at their birth. Upon a box in the corner of the room, beneath a clean white towel, a tiny baby slept its first and last sleep.

"Janey!" said Elizabeth.

Was it Elizabeth, or a voice from a

far world? She seemed not at all surprised by Jane Wilson's sudden entrance; and yet they had not met for six months, and she had not been told that the girl had left her situation. The woman in attendance raised a warning hand; Janey swallowed her sobs, stealing stealthily towards the bed.

"I wants Mrs. Robbins to go down an' get Tom's supper. There be a cold pie i' the cupboard. I made it for a bit o' surprise to him. I wants Mrs. Robbins to put him comfortable."

"So I will," said Mrs. Robbins. "You try an' have a nice little nap, Mrs. Turmits, my dear."

But Elizabeth's fading eyes were still fixed on the pretty caid lambs. "Be her gone? It be past his supper-time. Janey, you sit down along o' me. I be tired, my lass, I be tired out; I couldn't get up an' see to him, not if it was ever so. I be hop-tying, an' my limbs be that stiff! The wind be cold, an' I cut up my petticoat for Alice. Her wanted a warm frock, so her did, my pretty dear! The little 'un as is coming, her'll never beat Alice; she be the prettiest child ever I had. I'll feel better i' the morning, Janey; the night's rest 'll ease me: but I 'a somewhat on my mind to say to you, if only I could think on."

"You sleep a bit first, Mrs. Turmits," said Janey, clasping the passive hand.

Elizabeth did not hear. "I've thought a deal about it, Janey; I 'a planned always. Tom, he'd break his heart,—that there sixpence, it must be paid, Janey!—" She came suddenly to herself. "Have I been talking rubbish? I loses my head like, 'an the words slips out so funny! But I've got it all right now I've remembered." She turned her head, and gazed at the girl. "The parson said, 'God helps them as helps theirselves.' An' it be true, I knows; but it struck cold like. An' then, when I couldn't go to church—the Almighty, Him know'd about my linsey—I got looking through the prayer-book, an' I found some other

words: '*Sure I am*,'—I shall think on 'em just now. One an' another saying, 'Tom, what'll ye 'ave?'—an' him so lonesome! He'll have took to drinking, may be, afore I be thirty, missis.—Janey, I 'a thought!—'Sure I am as the Lord'll avenge the poor, an' maintain the cause o' the helpless.' It were that showed me as the Lord be on our side. Him 'a got a hand for the helpless too, Janey."

"Mrs. Turmits! dear Mrs. Turmits," murmured Janey, her tears falling fast.

The tired eyes closed. "I be clean spent, Janey. Them hops, they be bound to be tied, an' our master, us mustn't cross him.—But I'll be rested i' the morning, my girl.—Work, work, work, all the years through! an' the House at last. No, the Lord'll save him. '*Sure I am*' as the Lord'll help the helpless. Janey, I was used to have wrong thoughts, upon times, but I knows better now. When us gets to the Lord, us'll see why this world had to be so hard, like.—You tell Tom as I'll be up i' good time. I'll see to him an' the little uns, so soon as it be light i' the morning.—I wants nought but a good night's rest. Tom, my lad."

Early on the following day, Thomas Turmits was ushered into the parson's study. "If you please, sir," said he, "I be come to draw out my money."

"My good friend, I was just about to visit you. I have heard of your sad trouble. But,—your money?"

"The money as I 'a paid into that there scheme," said Thomas doggedly. "Us be bound to have a parish coffin. The Relieving Officer, him won't give me the order, so long's I've anything laid by."

VII.

It was the evening of Elizabeth's burial-day. At home, in the old cottage, the parson was sitting with Thomas. The peaceful sunset lights were glowing once more; the kitchen was very still, the throng of children

having, as it were, melted away. The former baby was in charge of Mrs. Robbins; Alice already at an orphanage, to which Jane Wilson's late mistress subscribed; two of the boys had been taken, for the present, by Jane and her mother; only the two eldest and their pet, little Dick, remained. Dick was now upstairs in bed; Bill and Jack sat, like two automats upon the settle, staring at the parson.

The young parson's celibate heart was touched. He sincerely desired to comfort the bereaved husband, but nothing that he said seemed to penetrate the stolid reserve of this yokel. He answered only when absolutely necessary, and in monosyllables; he shed no tear; no change of expression lightened the heavy countenance. Was it reserve, or apathy? thought the parson. After all, as the lecturer on Thrift had remarked, these people were little more than animals; good, hard-working animals, no doubt, but as for any higher emotion,—well! all the better for them! especially better for this widower with his motherless children. The back is mercifully suited to the burden among these agricultural poor, the parson thought.

Suddenly wheels, which for some minutes he had heard approaching, stopped in the road before the door. Thomas Turmits did not look round, but the elder boy jumped down from the settle and ran out. The parson espied the black hood of the carrier's van.

"Daddy," said Bill, re-entering with a little parcel which he laid on the round table beside Thomas. The wheels had resumed their rumble, the hood passed the window and vanished.

"What be this?" said Thomas.

The rosy boy looked sheepishly at the parson, shuffled, sniffed, and sighed.

"Daddy," he repeated in a half whisper, edging nearer to his father; "it be the best half pound o' bacca as the carrier 'ooman could get for the shilling."

"There be some mistake," said Thomas, giving the parcel a slight shove.

"Tell your father the truth, my boy. Speak out," said the parson.

Thus urged, Bill mustered his courage. "It were mammy as put the shilling in the cracked teapot, done up i' paper, last Saturday was a week, daddy; an' her told me as, if her lived, it 'ud be her churching fee; but if her died, I were to say nothing afore the funeral, but watch for the carrier 'ooman, an' send for half a pound o' good bacca, an' give it to you for a bit o' comfort like. 'Cause mammy said——"

"Go on, my little fellow," repeated the parson.

"Mammy said, daddy," went on Bill, with a shaking voice, "as you'd want comfort badder after the funeral. 'Cause you'd be a bit excited, afore; but after, it 'ud seem all so lonesome like."

Then the little lad gave vent to his tears. But Thomas Turmits, rising hastily, his chair clattering overturned on the bricks, snatched as hastily at his hat, and disappeared through the back-kitchen door to a barn in which he could neither be seen nor, as he doubtless imagined, heard. The parson, however, passing out five minutes later, did hear him, for he was weeping bitterly.

One month more, and the June sun was shining upon a bright young bride. And as she passed, on her husband's arm, that long green mound which enshrined rest beyond the reach of wedding-bells, she stopped and looked down. "Mrs. Turmits would be glad," she said softly.

The stalwart young bridegroom looked also, pressing the arm which held her hand, to his side. "Oh, if it had been you, Janey, if it had been you!" he said, half shuddering, under his breath.

"Should you have cared, Ted?"

"Cared? Ah, lass! You don't

know yet, you don't know half what you are to me."

The words were sweet to Janey. But as she listened, her eyes filled, for other words were echoing in her mind. "*When we loves 'em, it be better to die for 'em than leave 'em alone to go wrong.*"

Elizabeth Turmits had died.

VIII

"It is a problem, after all," said the parson.

"What is a problem?" inquired the keen-faced lecturer.

"This question of Thrift. My opinions are unsettled. When the three kinds clash, what is to be done?"

"The three kinds?" repeated the lecturer.

"Last November I saw only one. After further research, I see three most distinctly."

"Name them."

"First, your own kind. Shall we call it, to be brief, the earthly kind?"

"Quite so. It could hardly be otherwise, unless the art of ballooning should some day enable us to extend our operations," observed the lecturer.

"Secondly, Elizabeth Turmits's kind. Suppose we call that, for the sake of argument, the heavenly kind?"

"Well——!" said the lecturer hesitating: "for the sake of antithesis, rather, and from courtesy to your office, suppose we do."

"Thirdly"—the parson meditated.

"Thirdly?" re-echoed the lecturer with curiosity.

"The third kind I can't define. It ought to unite the others. But it is an undeveloped science," said the parson, rising. "I know only that when we have mastered it, we shall have found a more excellent way than to squander such material as lies there!"

And he pointed to the calm grave where Elizabeth Turmits slept, in her prime, her baby on her breast.

E. CHILTON.

